

FOCUS
MIDWEST

73

**WOMEN ARE:
COURAGEOUS, AGGRESSIVE,
STRONG, LOGICAL, INTELLIGENT,
CONSTRUCTIVE, CREATIVE AND
INDEPENDENT
HUMAN BEINGS.**



FOCUS/Midwest, Volume 9, Number 59. Second class postage paid at St. Louis, Mo. Published bimonthly by FOCUS/Midwest Publishing Co., Inc. Subscription rates: \$5/6 issues (one year); \$9.00/12 issues (two years); \$12.50/18 issues (three years); \$19/30 issues (five years); \$100 lifetime. Foreign \$2 per year extra. All back issues are available. Allow one month for address changes. Advertising rates upon request. Enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope with manuscript. May-June 1971. Copyright © 1973 by FOCUS/Midwest Publishing Co., Inc. No portion of this magazine may be reproduced in any form without the express permission of the publisher. Please mail subscriptions, manuscripts, and Post Office Form 3579 to FOCUS/Midwest, P.O.B. 3086, St. Louis, Mo. 63130.

FOCUS/Midwest is indexed by the Public Affairs Information Service, Inc. (PAIS), the American Bibliographical Center, the Annual Bibliography of English Language and Literature (Leeds, England), and the Index of American Periodical Verse.

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Horse Trading in Missouri

The Equal Rights Amendment passed in the U.S. House of Representatives October, 1971, and in the U.S. Senate March, 1972. Since that time 28 states have passed it, 10 short of ratification. The supporters have seven years to reach the goal of 38.

The proposed Twenty-seventh Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was introduced in the Missouri House last spring by Speaker James Godfrey and Democratic Majority Leader Richard Rabbit; in the Missouri Senate, by Sen. William Cason, who is President Pro Tem, Ike Skelton and Raymond Howard. The ERA immediately was referred to the respective Resolutions Committees.

Apparently, the ERA's introduction at that time was nothing more than a gesture, with the approaching November elections undoubtedly an influential factor. In fact, several members of the Resolutions Committees never had heard of the ERA at that time. Reportedly, the House was the scene of a trade-off with the anti-busing forces, with one side agreeing to refrain from voting to bring the ERA out of committee in return for a vote against anti-busing.

In the 1973 session the ERA has been re-introduced, with Rabbit again sponsoring the bill in the House, assisted by Sue Shear, as well as Wayne Goode and Steve Vossmeier. The Resolution in the Senate is sponsored by Raymond Howard alone.

While the Democratic caucus deleted the ERA from its list of legislative priorities for this session and is considering replacing the ERA with a bill to reinstate capital punishment in Missouri, the Republican national committee has reminded each of its legislators that the ERA is part of the Republican national platform. Gov. Kit Bond has included ERA in his legislative package for this session.

As SCR 3, the ERA was assigned to the Senate Judiciary Committee, which held a very unfriendly hearing. Witnesses on the Resolution's behalf were subjected to unheard-of treatment. In a timed hearing, the Committee insisted on questioning Sen. Howard at length on the bill, then asked witnesses to testify on areas outside their particular competence. For example, Prof. Thomas Emerson, a constitutional scholar from Yale, who has done the only definitive study of the effects of the ERA on our legal structure, was requested to testify on Missouri law. Prof. Joan Krauskopf from the University of Missouri School of Law was asked to describe the Resolution's effects on the criminal law in Missouri, when she came prepared to discuss domestic law.

At the "hearing's" end the Committee voted not to refer the Resolution to the floor of the Senate for a vote. Led by Maurice Schechter, committee chairman, Lem Jones, Frank Bild, William Esely, Larry Lee, Albert Spradling and Paul Bradshaw voted against the Resolution. Only Jack Gant, John Joynt, and Raymond Howard voted for it. Earl Blackwell, an avowed supporter of the ERA, was not on hand for the hearing or the vote.

As HJR 18, the ERA was assigned to the House Constitutional Amendments Committee. (It was introduced in both houses so that should it run into trouble in one house it still would have a chance in the other.) After two nights of hearings for both pro and con forces, the Amendment was referred to a specially appointed subcommittee, presumably for a study of its effects on Missouri law.

The Resolution is expected to be referred out of

the House committee in the very near future, and it is expected to pass the House. The problem lies in the Senate where ironically the pro-ERA forces appear to have the necessary votes on the floor, but not in the committee. It would seem that in a matter of this importance, the House Judiciary Committee would be compelled to report the Resolution out, in order to enable all the members of the Senate to make a decision for themselves.

Illinois and its "brainless, braless broads" (says Rep. Hanahan)

The Amendment's political history in Illinois has been equally checkered. Introduced in April of 1972, the Resolution was defeated in the House of Representatives. No formal hearing was held at that time. The Resolution was introduced in the Senate in late May and passed 30-29, the minimum number of votes necessary. (A key vote at that time was Sen. John Knuppel's. Sen. Knuppel's seat currently is being challenged on a recount instigated by conservative forces after his re-election in the fall.)

The ERA went back to the Illinois House in June, and this time a full open committee hearing was held. The Amendment was recommended to that body with a Do Pass and received 81 of the needed 89 yes votes. It then was put onto the Postponed Consideration docket. Because it appeared the needed yes votes still weren't available in the fall, it was not voted on at that time.

Leaders in the ratification effort and co-sponsors in the House are Representatives Giddy Dyer (Rep.) and Eugenia Chapman (Dem.). Their efforts have not been fully supported by the Resolution's other sponsors, 15 of whom voted against it when their time came. What seemed to them a good idea in the beginning, faded in light of pressure applied by veteran right-winger Phyllis Schlafly, who calls Illinois her home.

Ironically, Illinois' new 1970 Constitution includes an ERA, which has become a football passed between the pro's and the con's. According to the proponents, what's good for Illinois is good for the nation. According to the opponents, Illinois doesn't need a national ERA.

Chief among the opposing forces in the House is Rep. Thomas Hanahan (Dem.), who described supporters of the ERA as "brainless, bra-less broads." Rep. Hanahan is the voice of labor. Rep. Henry Hyde (Rep.) is another member of the opposition. Rep. Hyde was defeated in the primary last year, but managed to retain his seat when a friend resigned and he was able to step in. Rep. Hyde is known for his challenge to Speaker Robert Blair's leadership.

Part of the hassle in which the ERA now finds itself in Illinois may be related to the fact a number of its supporters took part in the challenge to Mayor Daley's leadership of the Democratic delegation last fall. Although some liberal legislators took the trouble to fly in to Springfield to vote for the ERA, it appears some Democratic votes were withheld because of the challenge.

Other political considerations include the very close split in the Illinois House: 89 Republicans to 88 Democrats. The Senate has a similar situation.

The resolution was reintroduced in the House (HJR-CA14) and Senate (SJR-13) on February 28.

Working in the ERA's favor are two new women senators. Last fall Sen. Esther Saperstein, sponsor of the Resolution, was alone. The House has six new fe-

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Moving on

SARAH SLAVIN SCHRAMM

A big part of the American dream is equality. Much like a double exposure, inequality also is a part of our lives. One of the greatest inequalities we face today is of a sexist nature. Interestingly enough, men are discriminated against in this manner just as women are.

Part of the backlash to our civil rights epoch is the plaintive assertion that morality cannot be legislated. Whatever response that may evoke, a moral judgment on the kinds of sexual differentiations our society sanctions, is long overdue.

The beginning of that judgment came when the contradiction between the female stereotype to which most of us are accustomed, and the female in reality became so obvious that it literally screamed for recognition. Forty-one percent of the labor force is female, and our children's readers depict women in aprons. Improved methods of birth control and a lengthened life span limit the number of years women now devote to child care, yet our daughters typically are not given adequate career counseling and encouragement.

The women's movement is part of the temper of our times, during which groups of humans are eddying about the liberation concept. The movement is organized, true, but primarily it is spontaneous, affecting each of us in different ways.

The question before us currently is who is going to make the needed moral judgment, and how.

The euphemism "women's liberation" tacitly makes an assumption most of us who are so labeled are unwilling to

make: that we can liberate other women by our actions. Liberation is a very personal concept, and none of us are about to go around "liberating" others.

It is as if women have been trapped in a mirror, compelled to conform to an image reflected not from within themselves but from the way society chooses to see them. Women have been confined to the inner depths of a bell jar, to use Sylvia Plath's terrifying metaphor.

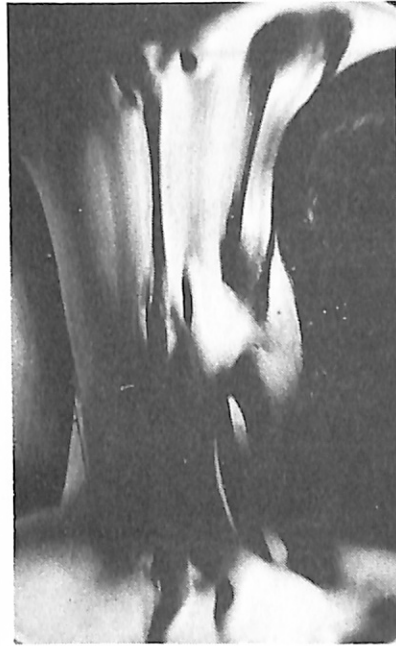
On the first day of the world, cracks appear in the mirror. A sort of inner illumination begins to take place: awareness of self, consciousness of independent feelings, and wishes. Before too long, the mirror is shattered; the bell jar lifted. The results may be cataclysmic.

Liberation demands some kind of self-actualization. The individuals who experience such impulses are going to want to enter into relationships in which they can have some say in the formation, the duration, and even the end. They want control, not all of it, but their fair share. These individuals want to be accepted for what they really are, not to be committed to fulfilling some sort of preordained role about which they had nothing to say.

It's hard to say exactly who that liberated person is going to be. She may have a strong identity with a group, but most importantly she will be independent even if within a group.

Each of us needs to deal with her own self, realizing all the while that a self ultimately must relate to others — female and male. With self esteem comes the possibility to





enhance those significant others and to be enhanced in return.

That's when life begins to be exciting, full of challenge and all those other things commencement speakers have been exhorting through the years. Maybe commencement is a good way to look at it. After a long process of inner growth, we are ready to be.

Liberation also includes a strong attempt to control destiny, in a group as well as individually. An opened-up world isn't going to be too useful unless it's relevant. Practically speaking, relevance means hard work through social actions. It's necessary to formulate some specific ends, decide how those ends best can be reached and then organize, organize, organize, in order to be united enough to reach the projected goals.

In the case of the feminist movement, a few of the many projected goals include equal opportunity in jobs and education, control of a woman's own body and reproductive functions, better-defined rights in the marriage relationship, and abolition of the so-called protective laws. Then there are the intangibles, things like the recognition of women and men's basic equality and changes in attitudes about women's "roles." And there's more, lots and lots more, which is why there's a movement. Women are concerned about all the issues of our humanistic times, and properly so.

We are examining ourselves, and we're also examining our relations with men, and men increasingly are doing the same . . . all of which is the cause of a bouying sense of

optimism within me, with regard to the possibilities for a future in which we can begin to treat people as people.

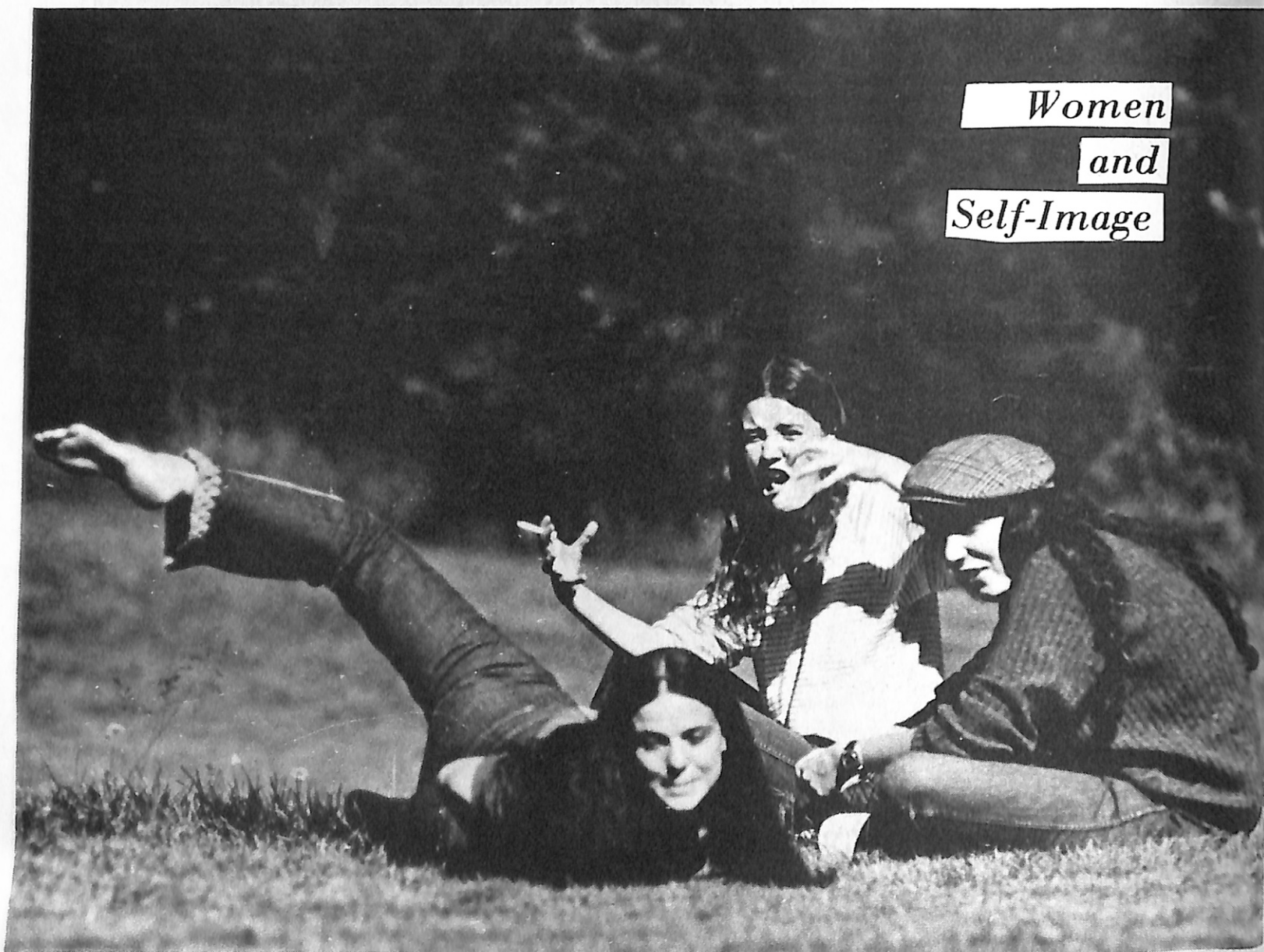
I have come through a period of time in which I was furious — literally furious — about the dependent position in which I found myself. The position was all the more incongruous when I considered the great effort my parents had put forth from the very beginning to insure me a reasonable degree of independence. Add to that the fact I have a strong personality, not given to dependence, and I was forced at last to the realization that the responsibility for my here and now is mine.

With my movement friends came a sisterhood I'd never experienced before. And then I began to find I know men who are human and good. Perhaps the culmination came recently when a beloved friend told me I was like a rose, blooming out all over, but maybe it's only the beginning.

Maybe it's only the beginning for me and for my sisters and brothers, and for my children, and for men and women, for us all as humans. Each of us is making the moral judgment about his/her own importance and asserting it when we become a part of a movement aiming for nothing less than human liberation.

Sarah Slavin Schramm is an instructor in the Social and Behavioral Studies MAT Program at Webster College and chairone for a national NOW committee on woman's studies.

*Women
and
Self-Image*



Children's Literature, Sex Roles and Mental Health

NANCY BARRON

Are you up to a raised consciousness about children's literature?

"Freddy liked Melissa even though she was a giggly girl. He took her for a ride on the back of his tricycle. Melissa giggled in his ear and made it tickle. Then they played ball, but Melissa couldn't catch it and it rolled into the garden."¹²

This book is sold as recommended material for kindergarten children.

"Ma!/You won't have to worry/any more!/Pa taught me how/to be safe at the shore!"²

This book, one of the popular Random House I Can Read Books, has a 1968 copyright date to go with Ma's 1930ish apron and cap, back-seat position and stay-at-home hand-wringing.

The Cat in the Hat, probably the most famous by Dr. Seuss, illustrates a common disparity between sister and brother: The sister cowers around the corner as the brother aggressively charges out "I bet, with my net, I can get those things yet."¹⁴

Tugboat Tom had a tugboat and he pushed and pulled big ocean liners. One day he heard a cry for help. It was none of the expected nautical crises.

"No! It was Mrs. Hippo. She had gone out too far on her toy horse. She should have known better than that. Shouldn't she."¹⁵

This story is one of the few included in Richard Scarry's eleven *Teeny Tiny Tales* which mentions a female character. The single girl main character has the thrilling adventure of a teaparty with her dolls, climaxed by a nap.

In *What Do People Do All Day*, Scarry says of the single woman lead character, "What would we ever do if we didn't have mommies to do things for us all day — and sometimes all night?"¹⁶

How many female characters are in *Winnie the Pooh*? What is Mama Kanga's role? Similarly, Mrs. Jumbo's role is to support and be rescued by *Dumbo*. Many Walt Disney presentations share this theme. These are neither rare nor trivial examples.

Learning Sex Roles

Picture books are an active agent for the socialization of young children. Through books (and records and TV shows and movies and the like), children gain concepts of things they have not yet experienced directly, and interpretations

of the experiential reality surrounding them.

The influence of books manifests itself in a number of ways. In their play children pretend they are characters from their books. Their language — vocabulary, phrasing, inflection, tone of voice — reflects what has been read to them. They react to objects and persons in terms of the values portrayed in story themes. One two-year old, seeing a young black man, asked happily "Is he Gordon?" (of *Sesame Street*).

By the third or fourth year, children have learned sex role limitations, express sex role preferences,⁴ recognize prescribed behavior for boys and girls, men and women,⁸ adopt a sex role identification and many of the prescribed behaviors, and know the general societal worth or value assigned to males and females!⁹

Jennings¹¹ demonstrates that nursery-school children prefer the role of a mail carrier (masculine-typed) to the role of a ballet dancer (feminine-typed). They prefer the man as a mail carrier and a woman as a ballet dancer, but they remember the story longer when the sexes are reversed, presumably because of the novelty involved.

In an already classic study by Lenore Weitzman et al., "the very best children's books" are investigated for their treatment of sex roles. (Reviewed were the Caldecott medal winners of the last five years and the Little Golden Books which had sold over a million copies, the Newberry Award winners, and the "prescribed behavior" books.) The results are clearcut. Titles reflect a 3:1 male/female ratio. Illustrations of people show an 11:1 male/female ratio, and if animals are included a 95:1 ratio obtains. Females are first of all, nearly invisible.

Boys are active, girls are passive. Girls perform service activities; boys perform leadership activities. Boys develop same-sex friendships; girls rarely play or work together. Boys grow or develop markedly in stature and skills; girls do not.

For women and men, role models are similarly stereotyped. Males rescue; females are rescued. Usually the only female character is a wife or mother portrayed in relation to the leading males. The three remaining roles are a fairy, a fairy godmother, and an underwater maiden. Male characters play a diverse and interesting range of roles. Not one woman in the Caldecott sample had a job or profession. Fathers do not help with housework or child care.

Her conclusions are that these situations are unrealistic, and damaging to the development of the young boy as well as the young girl.²⁰

Small wonder that girls resist the feminine role and that boys cherish the masculine role.⁴ Conversely, boys suffer also for although their role is more appealing, they find it to be demanding and stressful.⁸

The conclusion emerges that children's books portray pictures of sex roles which are not conducive to the mental health of either boys or girls.

Values Projected into Language

These unhealthy sex-typed values are mediated by our language forms. The prescriptive grammatical convention of referring to any indefinite individual as *he* has obscured a political fact of mental health: That we, in our society, generally subscribe to a concept or standard of mental health that applies stringently to males but only loosely to females. Consider the composite of the self-confident, self-reliant, self-actualizing, self-determining well-integrated person who, independently calling a spade a spade, actively masters her environment.* What kind of female is that? Not the conventional good girl, or wife, or mother.

In actuality, two sets of criteria exist: different standards of mental health apply for men and women. The ideal of the mentally healthy individual corresponds more closely to the concept of the healthy man than to the concept of the healthy woman. Phyllis Chesler, in *Women and Madness*, quotes this and similar information to the effect that "only men can be mentally healthy."⁶

Another Kind of Children's Stories

"Say, maybe Gladys is looking for me right now? What if she thinks I'm lost? I bet at this very minute she's telling a policeman that her good friend Irving is lost. Gladys will offer a reward for finding me. Gladys will get everyone in the neighborhood to look for me. Yes. That's just what Gladys would do. She's my friend. I think I'll go back to where I was supposed to meet Gladys."⁷

Somehow this sounds different than Freddy and Melissa.

"Someone I know/can keep doing more than she could do before./I can. Can you?"¹¹

This book contrasts can'ts and cans of a little girl such as: reading a book/telling a familiar story word for word; climbing a tree without skinning a knee/keeping on trying without even crying.

"Suddenly Miffy heard/a soft cheep! cheep." Half-buried in the snow/was a bird with frozen feathers. Miffy cried when she saw/how cold and sad it was. "Poor little bird," she said./"I will build you a house." She fetched some wood,/a hammer and some nails. Soon she had made/a little wooden house."⁵

Dick Bruna provides this active little girl rabbit's winter adventures.

"Mommy and Joshua had lots to tell each other as they walked home (from the day care center) . . . Later, as Joshua got ready for bed . . . he told Mommy about how angry he had become. Mommy listened. She knew about the feelings Joshua described and it made him feel better to talk about them."¹⁸

"The farmer was getting the evening milk from her goat when she heard the gentle cry of the first spring lamb coming from the stable."⁷

These books were created by a feminist collective to illustrate realistically available role options.

Which group of stories would you prefer for the children whose mental health you care about, the former or the latter?

Selectivity and action are the greatest allies to good children's literature. A hard search will reveal a few books, old and new, containing positive diversified views of both

males and females. For young children, objectionable story lines may be verbally modified if the illustrations are acceptable. Certain authors and certain publishers may be relied upon to produce non-sexist materials. The pressure of public opinion may be brought against authors and publishers, book sellers and libraries. One can create one's own stories to emphasize diverse role behaviors.

My personal strategy to correct damaging stereotypes in children's books has been to avoid the use of "he" for "he or she," to offer information to all persons in any way interested in children and their books, and to diligently search out countervailing examples of literature which emphasize mentally healthy and individualized role models.

My four-year old daughter recently announced with enthusiasm that "when I get big, I'm going to be a pilot, a parent, and a pipe fixer!" For this possibly unique occupational combination I am grateful to Eve Merriam for *Boys and Girls*, *Girls and Boys*,¹³ to Marlo Thomas and Harry Belafonte for the proclamation that "parents are people,"¹⁹ and to a nursery school teacher who encouraged her curiosity about a funny dark hole with a ladder down the side.

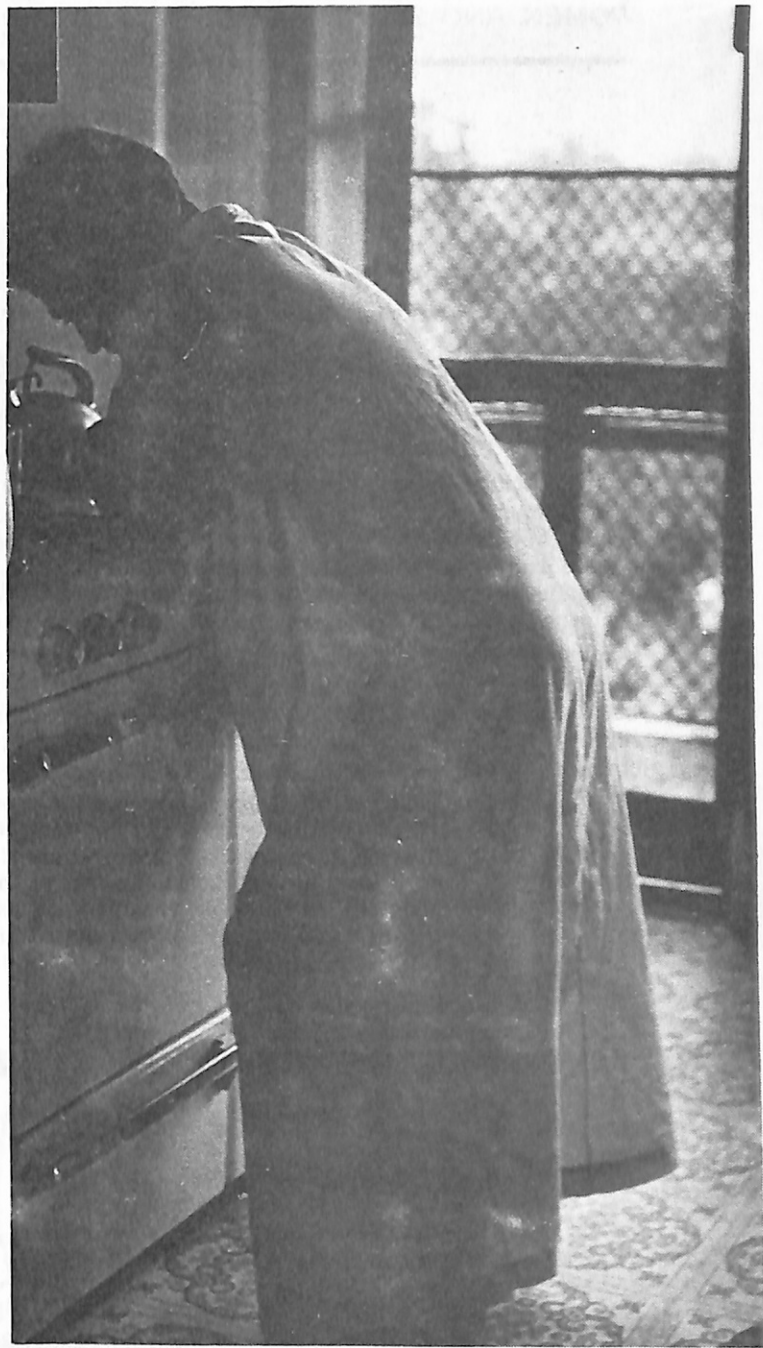
Fostering mental health through children's books takes, first, a raised consciousness, and then, selective action. Are you concerned enough to try?

*The reader is referred for an extensive discussion of the dimensions of an individual's mental health to Marie Jahoda's *Current Concepts of Positive Mental Health*,¹⁰ and is invited to substitute feminine references for masculine references for an enlightening alternate reading. Predominately similar components of mental health result from a factor analysis by Logan Wright.²¹

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Women and Advertising

KATHY KANE

It is perhaps erroneous to speak of the use of women in advertising because we are not portrayed as female human beings, but as images, bodies and stereotypes. It is important to know, though, that something can be done about it.

Let us take a look at a sampling of the types of advertisements which abound in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

It would be grossly unfair, however, to ignore the fact that men, too, are dehumanized by advertisers. Just as women are shown to be what is "desirably" or "typically" feminine, men are put into the traditional patriarchal, aggressive, "superior" masculine stereotype.

It is indeed unfortunate that advertisers think that people will buy their products while they continue to misrepresent and insult human beings. The remedy for the situation needs to be found with the consumer. If we refuse to patronize businesses that use people in dehumanizing ways, they will be compelled financially, if not morally, to improve the quality of their advertising.

Kathy Kane is an uninvolved feminist.

HOUSEWIVES
Can Earn \$2.25 Hour
Over Age 18 only
Catalogue Company Needs
WOMEN TO FILL ORDERS
FROM HOME
No Experience Needed
241-0730

Even in employment it is not considered important for a woman to be particularly intelligent or skilled. A "catalogue company needs women to fill orders from home," apparently disregarding the current unemployment rate and the fact that there may also be men at home who want to make some money.



Why is a grown-up girl like P. J. Johnson still cheerleading?

Because she lives at Brazilia... not the only apartment community with a football team, but the only one to inspire a self-organized cheering squad. How does Brazilia spark spirit like P.J.'s? Easy. Brazilia offers the liveliest social calendar she can find, plus the facilities to enjoy it... all centering around Brazilia's unique, brand-new partyhouse. She can swim, sauna, shop or swing. Football season is over, but P.J.'s good times are just beginning. At Brazilia, there's never an off season! Come have a look at Brazilia today.

BRAZILIA

1, 2 & 3-bedroom
uni-level and bi-level apartments

from \$159

Furnished and Unfurnished available

To reach Brazilia: Take Lindbergh or I-244 to Lemay Ferry; then s. 1 block to Forder, and e. 1 block to Brazilia.

Phone 892-4221



The Levinson Corporation



In another ad we are asked, "Why is a grown-up girl... still cheerleading?" Perhaps it is because she enjoys sports but submits to the second-string position of onlooker. At any rate, she perpetuates the role of women as spectators in life. It is interesting to note that, no matter what our age, we are referred to as girls and not as women.

DELTA
The airline run by professionals.



Reservations Sales
Agent Nancy Palmer.
Another Delta Air Lines
professional.

Delta is ready when you are!

The Delta Air Lines ad invites, "Delta is ready when you are" and implies something other than flight. This illogical use of women can only be seen as blatant exploitation, little better (and only slightly more subtle) than the Stardust Burlesque ad.

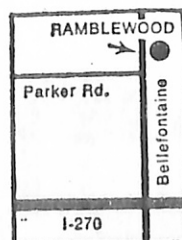


The expectations of married women projected through advertising are singularly limiting. The Ramblewood Apartments ad portrays the wife as a frivolous, manipulative child who knows nothing but what she wants to buy; she is not even credited with any originality in her choice because her husband "has already heard about it."

**"...a groovy pool,
tennis courts, too,
and you'll just love
the club...besides,
I already signed the lease!"**

Meet Mrs. Happy Homemaker. She's asking (telling) her husband about the super new apartment living in Ramblewood. (He's smiling because he's already heard all about it.) Together they're about to discover the best apartment deal around—keyed to their active life-style, at rents even a young, "just starting out" budget can afford.

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Who Owns Your Body?

BIDDY HURLBUT

Biological freedom, fertility control, the right of women to control their own reproductive lives, means simply that the individual woman may determine for herself whether she will continue a pregnancy. Specifically it means that church, state, husband, parent, court, physician, or agency shall not make this decision for her.

Birth control usually means preventing conception but if it is true as demographic experts estimate, that 40 million abortions take place each year worldwide, the real controller of births is not contraception. Recently obtainable figures on legal abortions in the United States substantiate the early estimates of one million illegal abortions per year here.

Alone the above figures indicate a serious health problem if women must resort to illegal sources to terminate their pregnancies. More important to the woman seeking self-determination is the right to decide how her body will be used. While women from time immemorial have acted to eliminate untimely pregnancies, only in modern times have safe and legal methods been developed.

Margaret Sanger, founder of the Planned Parenthood movement, spelled it out over 50 years ago when she said, "No woman should ever bear a child she does not want." This concept has evolved from simple to sophisticated services and exploded upon the American public when the United States Supreme Court handed down a landmark decision January 22, 1973. This stunning decision clearly states that a woman has prior rights of privacy over her unborn for the first six months of gestation and thereafter until birth, her life, mental and physical health, carry a greater value than that of the developing offspring. (Or, farewell to the slogan womb to tomb and hello again to the premise of cradle to grave.)

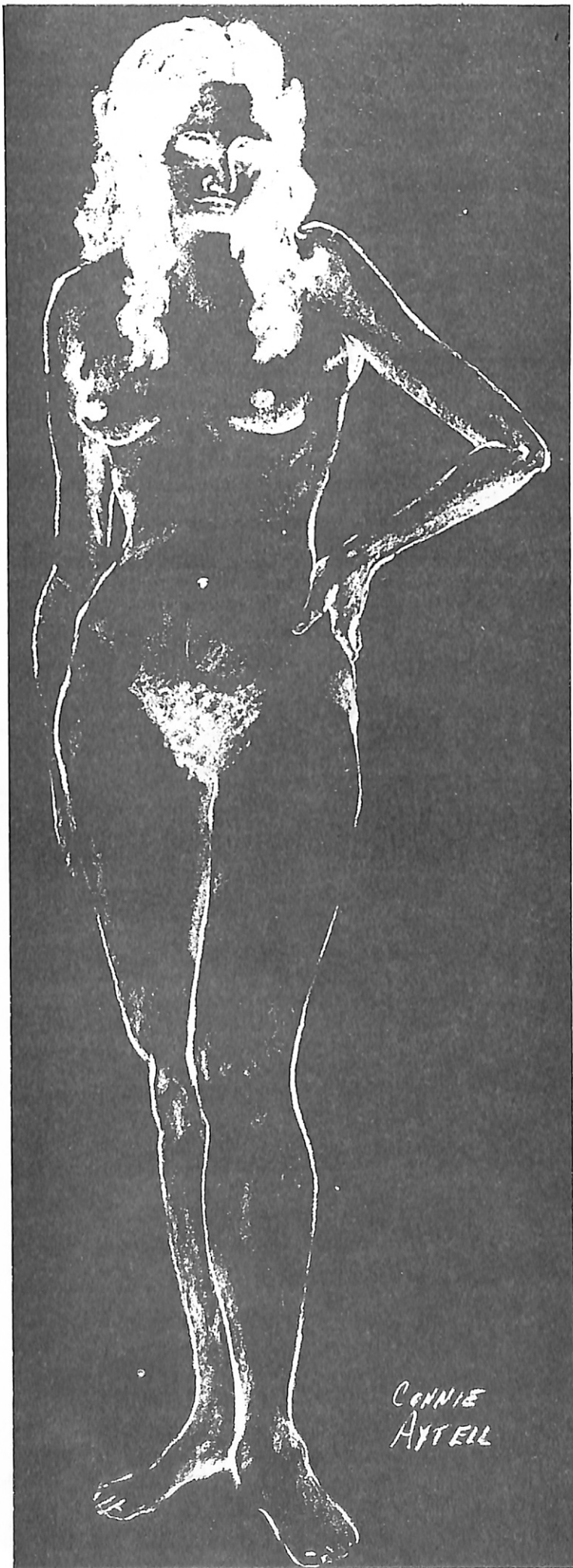
That women happily accept this new, if limited, right finally recognized was evidenced during the February 1973 Convention in Houston of the National Women's Political Caucus. Not once was the Supreme Court decision publicly discussed and when anti-abortion extremists arrived with their unsavory pictures, they were given space and access to delegates who courteously yet firmly ignored them. In fact the anti-abortion sign-up sheet bore five lonely names although posted for days on the bulletin board in full sight of 2000 convention women.

Protests to Continue

But the raging fury of protest over the Supreme Court decision will continue as is clear from the following: "I consider Jan. 22, 1973 the worst day in our history," said Bishop Floyd L. Begin of the Catholic Diocese of Oakland, and Washington's Archbishop Patrick Cardinal O'Boyle charged the Supreme Court with sanctioning what he called "hideous and heinous crime." Lester Kinsolving writes in the *Washington Evening Star* that O'Boyle's protest of the court's action is "so strong in fact as to cause wonderment as to what on earth His Eminence would have said had the



CONNIE
AYTELL



court ruled that states can force people to have abortions."

Little political savvy has been gained if women now relax and believe the abortion battle is won. And as the one visceral issue of the women's movement it must not be reversed, because as women experience biological freedom gained by political action, other areas of sex discrimination will be perceived to be changeable by that same power.

As the major human movement of the last hundred years (what other has as its goal the freeing of one half the human race?), the feminist revolution faces a society saturated with the Judeo-Christian culture of masculine advantage. In the area of marital sex, the commandment on adultery applied to wives "owned" by men. These same men "owned" the chastity of their unmarried daughters. Understanding this is important in recognizing the opposition to women controlling their own bodies. Significant also that the Supreme Court left undecided whether or not a woman needed her husband's (lover's?) consent and whether or not a very young woman needed parental consent to terminate a pregnancy. Ponder the now out-dated cartoons of the young woman and newborn being turned out of her home into the snow by the "heavy" father. It says, "You gave your body to another without my permission so be gone with the fruits of this transgression." Reconciliation (a Christian precept?) is as likely here as amnesty for draft evaders.

The culture says clearly that men — and this includes the hierarchy — rule women's bodies. Even while recognizing that biological freedom is the key to a woman's independence, one should remain sensitive to the smashed male stereotype and discredited Catholic dogma.

Parental Dominance

It would be unfair to close on such a bitter note. Generally speaking, children have been accorded fewer rights than women and the human characteristic of parental dominance applies also to mothers. Counselors know that contraceptive methods cannot be taught to many young women if their mothers are present. Even in post abortion situations, the mother insists her daughter doesn't need birth control for, "she's through with that stuff until she's married!" While there is a tacit understanding, if not approval, of a son's sexual activity no such privilege is allowed female offspring.

In the continuing struggle for biological freedom, women must not forget their younger, truly powerless sisters. Attitudes must change to provide protection for these victims who lose the most by untimely pregnancies. Oppressive laws will not fall easily. Power holders give up their power unwillingly. Until women have political power themselves, they must rely upon masculine good will, sensitivity and yes, even chivalry. Fortunately, an understanding of personal rights is growing with men as well as with women. A catalyst has been the question, "Who does own a woman's body?"

Biddie Hurlbut is a 10-year member of Christian Social Relations Board Bishop and Counsel Episcopal Diocese of Kansas.

1901



Sisterlove is Powerful

LAURA MOORE

We are Lesbians. We are women whose primary relationships are with each other. To us, a lesbian is a woman who defines herself by her own individual standards. We are woman defined women. By this is meant we fulfill our own needs emotionally, sexually, materially, and spiritually. We therefore are a threat to males society's definition of women. We are a threat because we do not need men.

Until the Women's Movement, gay women were isolated in this straight, male-defined society. We have been made to feel guilty, sick, deviant, and criminal. How can an act of love be condemned in these ways? In the same breath, we have been labelled dykes who can not "make it" with men, castrating bitches, sexually repressed, and over-sexed. As women, we are seen by men primarily as sexual objects, so it is fitting that we would be stereotyped in these sexual terms. Straight women are afraid of us because they think we are going to force our sexuality upon them in the way that men do. We are not men, we are women.

It is true that many of us have learned to pattern our lifestyles after that of heterosexual society, often borrowing the worst from that society, because there have been no other patterns to follow. "Butch" and "Femme" or "Stud" and "Fish" i.e. masculine/feminine roles are imitations of legitimate heterosexual relationships attempted by gay women to feel more "normal" sometimes even to the point of attempting to pass as male. Many psychologists say that these sex roles are natural, avoiding a broader socio-political explanation.

These male/female roles have been reinforced in gay bars, for some the only social situation where lesbians could meet other lesbians. Often controlled by organized crime and/or people with political clout, the bars are places where we as lesbians experience a variety of feelings. Sometimes there is a fear of exposure as a result of police raids; fear of not being able to "make it." Sometimes we feel free to be ourselves and at other times we feel depressed and isolated. This inhibition is a direct result of pressure to conform to roles and from the reality of being on exhibit for the entertainment of straights who frequent the bars. Despite their drawbacks, the gay bars offer us some of the few places to congregate and socialize with other lesbians.

Surviving in a Straight World

Since we have few places to be open about our life style, we still need to survive in a straight world. We are your secretary, your child's teacher, your school psychologist, your social worker, your waitress, your lawyer, your nurse, and your doctor. We are artists, musicians, and students. We are mothers, daughters, and sisters. We are

everywhere. You, straight society, force us to hide our lesbianism, to put on a straight front because you assume everyone around you to be straight. Because lesbians are forced to survive in two separate worlds, we live a schizoid existence.

With the advent of the Women's Movement, however, gay women are pulling out of their isolation and are organizing themselves. The Gay Women's Movement is creating a new and positive self image for lesbians and for women who want to define themselves.

Lesbians in St. Louis have begun getting together as a group to create positive alternatives to our common problems as gay women. We feel that as lesbians we have very few resources that are in support of our life-styles. We realize that we must create our lesbian-identified structures to replace the destructive and distorted ways in which institutional mental health has "helped" us and to augment the very limited amount of places that we can go to express ourselves openly and to meet other gay women.

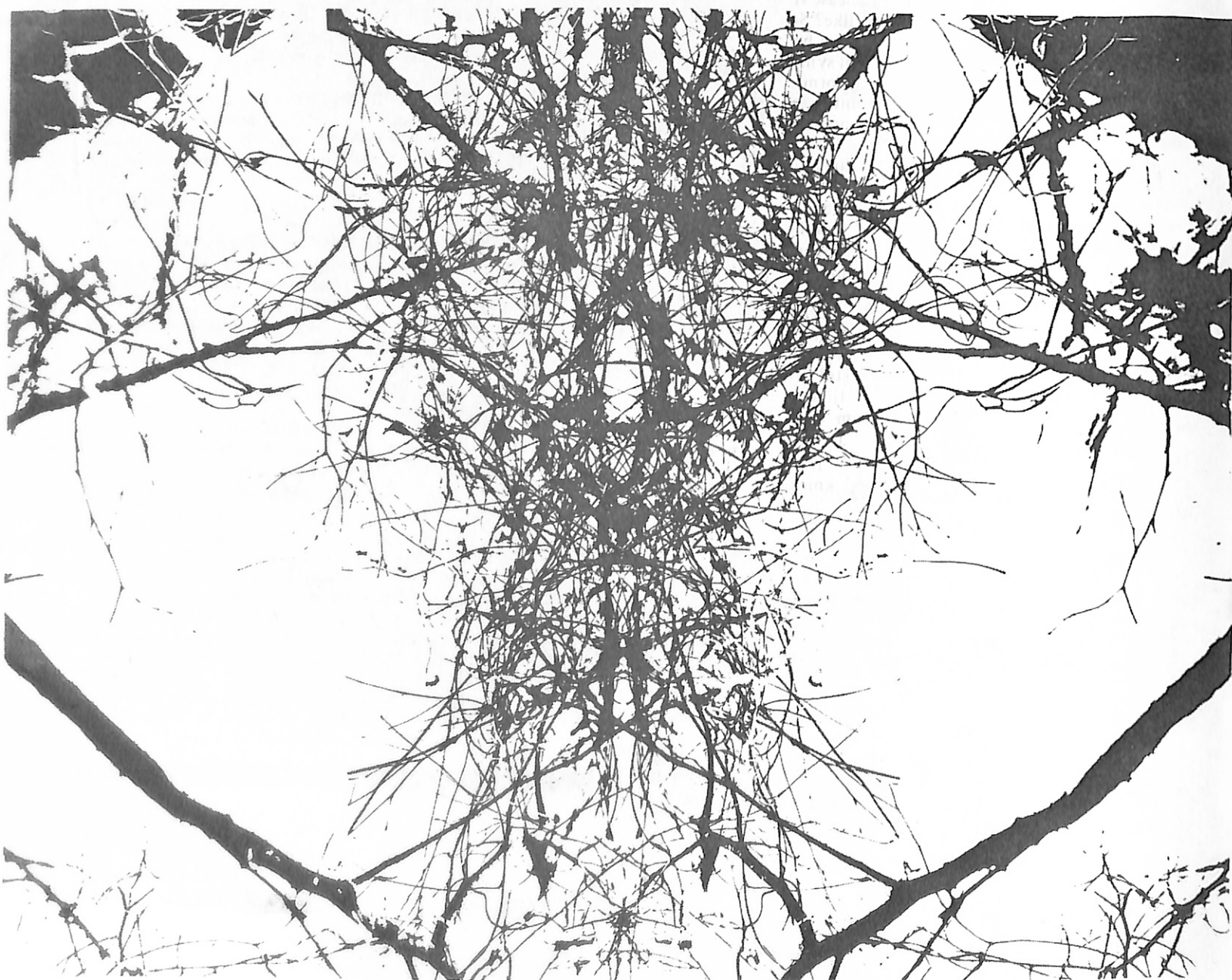
Becoming Self-Sufficient

We are becoming a self-sufficient community. We are our own mechanics, handywomen, and our own electricians. We are starting a Feminist rock band. We are beginning collective farms. We also have organized a Women's Coffeehouse.

Some women have begun a rap group/referral service for gay women. A list of interested women is kept and when there are enough for a comfortable sized group (usually six to eight women), a rap group meeting is set up. All of these activities are new ways for us to communicate and share with one another.

And so, despite a world of conflict and hostility, we are rising up. We are people, women of heart, mind, and soul. We are beginning to celebrate ourselves. We are woman identified women. We call all of womankind to celebrate with us the joys and strengths we share as women.

Laura Moore is a member of St. Louis NOW. ("Sisterlove is Powerful" was written collectively by four lesbian women and edited by Laura Moore.)



Towards a Feminist Art

HILARIE McMAHON

Acceptance of women as effective professional artists in an idea whose time has come. Our male colleagues are perceiving this with some clarity, but are not so clear on what to do about it. Women are still under-represented in major exhibitions, and on art school faculties, but pressure is being applied to change this, and the task of achieving equality of opportunity for women artists is now one of logistics. The debate centers on implementation, rather than on the validity of the goal.

Of deeper concern to women artists is the concept of a feminist art. Can there be such a thing? Some women are disturbed by the thought, not liking to be captured by an "ism" that may have nothing going for it beyond biology. But for some the concept is a release from old prohibitions.

What does feminist art look like? Some critics, including some women, who ought to know better, equate feminist art with the use of female sexual symbols of the Freud-for-the-masses variety. Orifices, egg forms, "womb space," and vaginal configurations are pointed out in the work of women. But they can also be pointed out in the work of men, who actually used them first, and one wonders if these symbols really have anything to do with the female mind, or only with the female body. Their frequent use by male artists suggests the latter, and there is, after all, a certain logic in that. Now that Freud himself stands accused as a sexist, the very symbols are open to doubt, and a hole may be merely a sign that something is missing.

An attitude towards subject matter can be a more subtle form of symbolism. At the recent "Women Choose Women" exhibition at the New York Cultural Center, a painting by Audrey Flack impressed me as a "woman's painting." It was an over-sized still life of jewelry, cut glass and bric-a-brac, painted many times larger than life, in a deliberately flashy combination of airbrush and bravura brushwork. I heard Flack speak about this painting, describing how she had gathered up the jewelry her husband had given her, and the "high kitsch" knick-knacks she collected because they amused her, and had set out to make a glittering "Baroque" painting. When she was finished, she had recognized it as a "woman's painting," and different from her other work. The painting had a quality of intimate sensory involvement with the gifts and possessions of a woman's domestic world, and the theme was dealt with in an exuberant, assertive, "first person" manner.

This is not to say that still life painting is feminist art, any more than "womb painting" is. Sometimes the female sensory response can take a very different direction, and result in the use of "non-art" materials borrowed from handicrafts and home-making. Granted, "non-art" materials have been used by men, but usually in a conceptual way. Felt, rope, and fabric have been heaped, dropped, and hung, with emphasis on random arrangement, and the raw material, rather than its manipulation. Now women are staining, soaking, tearing, braiding, sewing, and padding everything that will sustain such treatment.

The professional training a woman artist receives is less than helpful to the production or understanding of feminist art. For a decade, some 75 percent of all art students in this country have been women, and they have made the art schools effective by being good students. Co-operative to a fault, eager to learn, ever willing to respond and absorb, reluctant to question and argue, they have been put

through their adaptive paces by their instructors (98 percent male), have graduated amid smiles of approval and disappeared from view. They were not told that absorbing is not enough, that learning is not enough. Eventually, the creative act calls for assertion, not reaction, and that is precisely what a woman's upbringing and education have not fitted her. Many basics of the art school curriculum arise from male consciousness. The complex history of the female figure in art, from fertility symbol to odalisque/pin-up, via classical Greece, is the development of a male point of view. The effect on art of religion, science, and technology is input from disciplines developed almost exclusively by men. The freshman assignment which implies that drawing a wine-bottle and some drapery has more to do with learning to see, than drawing a half-peeled potato and a load in laundry, is part of the problem.

Even more disturbing is the career-goal which is held out to male and female art students alike, that of doing one thing well, and becoming famous for it. This runs counter to much of a woman's prior conditioning. Little boys are encouraged to think about "being" a doctor, a lawyer, or, with a lesser degree of parental enthusiasm, an artist. Little girls are encouraged to keep their options open, and their value structures flexible, so that they can adapt to the concerns of pastor or podiatrist, as romantic interest dictates. This can result in a loss of identity, but can also free women from preconceptions about how an artist is supposed to behave. Consider also that the physical events that befall a woman's body are more varied and frequent than those experienced by men, and have a greater effect on her state of mind; that the crafts in which women have traditionally worked use a wide variety of design and construction skills; that the search for self is leading women in many new directions; and the result may well be a high degree of diversity in a woman artist's work.

This may scandalize her male colleagues and teachers, who will murmur words such as "superficial." And it may also put her outside the commercial scene. Art dealers prefer to handle a readily identifiable product, with minor style changes at regular intervals, in the Detroit manner. What's good for General Motors is indeed good for Leo Castelli, as the stockholders are mostly the same. Investigations into a variety of ideas on a cyclical basis tend not to be marketable under the present structures.

This is unfortunate, as exhibitions of women's work can reveal an identity and sharing of interests which is not apparent when the same work is seen piecemeal. In the Midwest there are galleries and museums that could find the time and resources to show women's art, if they could just stop feeling embarrassed by the subject, and there are many trained and responsive women among museum personnel who could implement this. At a time when much of the art we see is refinement of the innovations of the past 75 years, the work of feminist artists is fresh, diverse and unpredictable — all good woman words, and nothing wrong with that!

Hylarie McMahon is assistant professor of painting at Washington University School of Fine Arts.

Feminism — a Journal of Emotion

SANDRA LEE BYRD

During the black civil rights movement a few years ago, I could not understand the need for sit-ins, could not understand the anger and militancy of some of those actively involved in the black movement. The strong emotion was something I could not even attempt to deal with, let alone understand.

Today in the Feminist Movement (in my mind all other movements have been lower case letters, the Feminist Movement is definitely capitals), I have travelled the long road from fringe interest to what my friends are now beginning to label radical. I've often wondered just how a "wild-eyed radical" looks when this term is used by the media. My friends tell me I'm rapidly learning, so I now practice looking "wild-eyed" to be ready when the time comes.

In my journey across the stages of feminist awareness, I have at last begun to understand the emotion of sisterhood. The anger, frustration, anxiety and guilt we have all felt through the years is shared in a beautiful way by our sisters. Recognizing this and coming together as a result of that recognition is what feminism is all about. Once these common feelings are acknowledged, a new emotional plane is reached where the avowed feminist is free to extend the hand of sisterhood to others who need to rip the silken curtain of sexism and step into the golden circle of freedom. "Freedom? We have a long way to go to freedom," the reader says in wonder. How true, but today's feminist is more free than any woman in our society and more free than women have ever been before. Recognizing oneself as a feminist and making the important decision to work within the Feminist Movement, risking the scorn and derision of peers, is the first big step toward freedom and the first big step toward a surge of emotion so strong and so new for many women that no one word has yet been coined to label it. The excitement of this common emotion vibrates through any gathering of feminists and will carry the Movement to fantastic heights.

Any woman who has felt herself abandoned to the painful existence of being a non-creature must surely shed tears of thankfulness and shout for joy when she joins hands with feminist sisters to stand up and be counted. Any woman who realizes that her identity is more than pots of colored face paint, more than lacquered layers of hair, more than revealing clothing, more even than marriage, children, dishes, a vacuum and a scrub brush, must surely respect herself and other women more for this honesty and forthrightness of self discovery.

Should we worry that, the more aware we become, the more angry we find ourselves? Should we worry that, the more radicalized we are, the more militant we wish to be? We are undoubtedly viewed today as many viewed blacks — too angry, too loud, too radical. Are we? Are we swinging with a pendulum gone wild, going from one extreme to the other? Are we attempting to overcome the age-old image of softness and femininity by creating a new one sizzling with pent up hatred? Is this strength of emotion too much for

Black Women as Feminists

BETTY LEE

I find it very difficult to assess the role of black women in the feminist movement. There are several factors which make such an assessment extremely complex and dichotomous.

As a member of an oppressed racial minority, I cannot help but to identify with feminists as they fight for their full measure of human dignity and equality. I also recognize the fact that black women will benefit greatly through the extension of women's rights because we as black women carry a heavier economic burden of responsibility for our families than white women. Also a disproportionate share of low status jobs are held by black women.

Historically, I am well aware of the degraded status of the black woman. During two hundred years of slavery we suffered brutally from sexual oppression; deprived of our children who were considered the property of the master and often violated sexually by the same master.

The need to remove the shackles imposed by sex is obvious. At the present time, however, my energy and talent must be directed toward eliminating racism and its effects. This must remain my top priority. I do not view the black man as oppressor, but victim of the same system as I. Black men are not responsible for the low economic, legal, educational position of women. Black women have suffered equally with black men. Our plight together has not been that of choice. We as blacks do not present a numerical majority.

The black movement cannot be divided along sexual lines. I feel that we will be able to deal most effectively with this country as a unified people, forming alliances with those who have the same common goals as we. I view the feminists as such an ally.

Betty Lee is editor of Proud magazine.

the movement to survive? We must say *no*, a thousand times *no*! We must shed our inferiority, stand on our new pride, on our new dignity, and face the sexist world as a strong and solid line of women who are marching toward a bright era of equality for human beings. We must shed the tears of joy and shout the words of triumph for all to hear for we are building a future for ourselves and those unborn females who will follow. We are the Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Susan B. Anthony's of our decade. The emotion of this, our Movement, must carry us to victory, to peace within ourselves and reliance upon ourselves as truly equal people.

Sandra Lee Byrd is a member of Kansas City NOW.

Women and Politics



The Missouri Experience

DEVERNE CALLOWAY

In Missouri, women's participation in politics is very closely related to this State's posture within the fifty-state family. This posture, in many instances, has close relationship to its geographical location; side by side with Kansas and Illinois, and somewhere in between New York and California.

Our tradition on major national issues, from the slave question, through Prohibition, Women's Suffrage, and the Repeal of Prohibition, has been a dragging reluctance to keep apace with the times. The mix of the population and a stubborn determination to resist new thought keeps Missouri always somewhere in the middle and often leaning heavily towards the conservative position.

Women in Missouri politics have, similarly, been several paces slower than national women. To elaborate on this -- we have to look back at the Women's Suffrage Movement here. Out of the turmoil of Civil War in the 1860's, came the movement among women demanding the right to vote. Developing in the Eastern states it fired the imagination of the stout-hearted women of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania immediately. However, it was not until the year 1872 that one, Virginia Minor, of Missouri, made a bold resolve, marched up to a County Clerk and demanded to be registered to vote. Denied this privilege, Virginia took it to Court. Missouri courts upheld this denial. And so did the Supreme Court two years later.

The Few Carried On

Only few women of Missouri noted or resented this adverse ruling. But small groupings of women in Springfield and St. Louis decided to work towards having a state law passed. Every two years, a handful of hopefuls would show up at the capitol with a petition, only to be jeered at, derided, and joked about. By 1914, these persistent women who nursed the idea had created enough popular support of the feminist cause to gather sufficient signatures for an initiative petition seeking to amend the constitution. It was, naturally, defeated.

Reflecting the mood of the times, Missouri women by 1916, were able to mobilize 7,000 strong for a demonstration in St. Louis where the Democratic Party was holding

its national convention. The Party adopted a weak platform favoring suffrage. The outbreak of World War I saw the heightened and frenzied zeal of women. Their services were used in many, until then, unheard of areas of work. President Wilson came out in favor of suffrage in 1918 and in 1919, an enlightened, though still reluctant Missouri General Assembly (the 50th), passed a law giving women Presidential Suffrage. And in that same year, at a special session called by Governor Gardner for that purpose, Missouri became the 11th state to ratify the Suffrage Amendment.

(It is noteworthy to mention that it was not until the 77th General Assembly -- 54 years later -- that a woman took her seat among Missouri Senators, a seat she ran for and won.)

After achieving the vote, the Missouri Chapter of National Suffrage movement changed its name to the League of Women Voters. And it appeared for a long stretch of years to abandon the feminist cause, adopting a role of educating, studying government, accumulating facts, and attempting to keep women, as well as men, informed on issues and matters political. The League appeared, until the 1960's, to steer clear of the feminist issues, ignoring in their quest for knowledge the facts that women were bypassed in the political process, forced to work for unequal wages, and completely discriminated against in certain aspects of employment.

From the time of the achieving of the right to vote, the passion towards equality of women in the political arena died out. Perhaps it was because the designing male quickly began using the new woman vote-power to enhance and assure his own election; perhaps because machine politics began to reach ascendancy in the big cities; perhaps because the inner working of politics were still guarded by hostile males. Whatever, it is apparent that Missouri women like women over the nation, seemed rather content with just having the right to vote and working very hard to support the ticket.

If any aspired to elective office, they shied away from the feminist platform. During this time, women began to attract the attention of male politicians... as whims. Wherever dominant male political figures were forced to

make a choice of someone to run for office, in a kind of unpredictable manifestation of hostility against other males in the game, often we saw women selected and supported.

Thus, in the period following World War II, we had across the state women elected to municipal posts, school boards, and the Missouri legislature. In St. Louis, a woman whose Congressman husband died, was chosen by his political supporters to take his Congressional seat. In this period, women were also given some recognition by appointments to a few boards and policy making agencies. In each and every case, the female figure was mainly an adjunct, her candidacy purposed and supported to protect the male politicians' interest or power bloc.

To their credit, those women elected in this manner have served with grace, credibility, and some distinction. (Oddly, when male politicians "resort" to support of a woman — their choices usually result in a higher caliber of person.) Ironically enough, some of these very same women became the most vocal opponents of the feminist political cause. This is especially noticeable in the current battle on the ERA ratification. Close search of these female politicians' origins reveal that those women who contributed the least, campaignwise, financially, or in voter appeal, are the ones who raise the most vociferous opposition to ERA.

In Missouri, as in the nation, the public reaction and conflicting philosophies which emerged from the Vietnam War evoked a reawakening of the feminist drive for political identity beyond the ballot box and the campaign head-

quarters of the male. We find women daring to announce independent candidacies, mobilizing, financing, running their own campaigns, and winning them.

The national women's political movement finds Missouri women slowly falling in line to take up the challenge. Slow to react, but determined, Missouri women in small pockets make their influence felt on the selection of delegates to the National Democratic Convention. Doing their hard home work on ward and district boundary lines, studying the elective process, pouring over party rules and regulations, women begin to take up where their grandmothers left off.

Pursuing this renewed determination, we realize one more gain for women in Missouri politics. Out of twelve women elected to the Missouri legislature, only one is elected in a purely feminist role. By that is meant that her selection to run was made by women, her campaign was organized and dominated by women, and her platform was dominated by feminist issues of the day. And for what it is worth, it should be clearly noted that this happening takes place only two years short of 100 years from the day that the Missouri lady, known as Virginia Minor, marched up to her county courthouse and demanded in vain to be registered to vote.

Rep. DeVerne Calloway is a Missouri state representative from the 81st district.

The 27th in Missouri

S. SUE SHEAR

In 1923 the Women's Suffrage Movement which won for women the right to vote, became the League of Women Voters. The League's main concern turned to providing information and knowledge about the issues which could lead to responsible citizenship rather than fighting for specific women's causes. And now 100 years after Virginia Minor marched up to the County Court House demanding the right to vote and 50 years after it was won, the L.W.V. has again taken up the battle for a specific women's cause — the proposed 27th Amendment to the Constitution.

As a woman legislator, I see myself in the forefront of the fight for this Amendment and other women's issues. Just as I am the representative of my whole district and not only of women, so issues that concern all of society also concern me. I hope to show that a woman can be just as competent a legislator as a man and I hope to work for progressive legislation that will benefit the whole state.

Rep. S. Susan Shear is a Missouri state representative from the 76th district.

EDITORIAL

male members; last fall it had only two. All eleven women are known to be friendly forces. In addition, a number of high-powered Republican women are working for the ERA's passage; one of these is the former director of the Governor's Office of Volunteer Action.

With a further House Executive Committee hearing due March 22 and the Senate Executive Committee hearings most likely on March 28, a state ERA office has been opened (101 N. 5th St., Room 206, Springfield, Ill. 62701). The office operates on a budget provided by national NOW. The measure is also supported by a state-wide coalition of eight organizations.

Perhaps the perfect example of the lack of serious attention given the Amendment is the recent appearance of a group of thirty women in Springfield. Opposed to the ERA, the women were presenting the legislators with loaves of bread, symbolic of the relationship between the breadwinners (supposedly male) and the breadmakers (supposedly female). A picture of the activity received front-page coverage in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

Unmentioned went a breakfast attended by 175 people supporting the Amendment, that same day. Also in attendance were 83 legislators. The *Post*, of course has been adamant in its support for the ERA, but even it could not resist the sensationalism the bread-baker-outers offered, and the resultant misemphasis it provided.

Equal Rights Amendment EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Far From Dead in Missouri

MARCIA B. MELLITZ

The Equal Rights Amendment is alive but not well in Missouri. The press has projected the image of a "grass-roots" movement of irate housewives storming the state legislatures with a dirty dish in one hand and a baby in the other. These citizens, led by their own Joan of Arc, Phyllis Schlafly, have triumphed despite the fact that the President, the Congress, the leadership of both political parties, and the established women's organizations all support ratification of the amendment.

Phyllis Schlafly has been the pied piper of the anti-ERA forces and the instrument she plays upon is fear. Her appeal is to those men and women who distrust anything that changes the status quo. She operates by planting doubts in the listener's mind. It is akin to methods used by the John Birch Society. Even though the statement can be shown to have no basis in fact, the gnawing question still remains: What if the things she says come to pass? A favorite tactic is to liken future life in the United States under the ERA to life in present day Russia or The Peoples Republic of China, thus raising the spectre of Communism.

Though it is understandable for the public to be ill-informed or misinformed on a given legislative issue, this is not acceptable for a state legislator. Why did half of those representatives who last fall committed themselves to vote for the ERA, suddenly change their minds after taking office?

Overnight the Amendment became the second most controversial issue — abortion being number one. The Supreme Court decision temporarily took the wind out of the anti-abortion effort, and they turned their ire at the Supreme Court against the ERA. Suddenly there was concern over the "vagueness" in the wording of the Amendment (in reality those amendments granting fundamental rights were all worded as simply). Legislators were parroting Phyllis Schlafly's sentiments: The ultimate interpretation of the ERA would be by the Supreme Court, and we know from experience now, that you can't trust the Supreme Court to decide things the way we would like them.

The standardbearer of the proponents of the ERA in Missouri, Representative S. Sue Shear, has much in common with Phyllis Schlafly — she too is a physically attractive, middle-aged woman, has raised three children, and is married to a lawyer-businessman. Both have run for public

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What's in It for Black Women?

FRANKIE MUSE FREEMAN

"Section 1. Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

"Section 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article."

"Section 3. This amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification."

Three simple sentences, the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, yet they have created a furor in many states which are now considering whether to vote for ratification of the Amendment. In the midst of this furor, many black women are silent. Of what relevance is the Equal Rights Amendment to us? What do we stand to gain? What do we stand to lose? I submit that we have much to gain, and nothing to lose.

To understand our stake in the Equal Rights Amendment, we should understand several basic facts regarding the Amendment. The Equal Rights Amendment would establish a fundamental legal principle; that the law must deal with the particular attributes of individuals, not with classifications attributed to one sex or the other. Just as the Fourteenth Amendment established the principle of equal protection of the law without regard to race, the Equal Rights Amendment would establish the same principle with regard to sex. Without the Equal Rights Amendment, the Supreme Court would have to interpret the Fourteenth Amendment to include sex (which it has not), or Congress and state legislatures would have to amend existing legislation on a piecemeal basis, a lengthy and unlikely process.

Opposition Answered

Those who are arguing against ratification generally rely on the following points.

- "Rest rooms would be 'de-segregated.'" While I cannot resist noting that rest rooms have been "de-segregated" on airplanes for some time, the answer, in fact, is that the Equal Rights Amendment would not require such action, for the doctrine of privacy would apply.
- "Women would be subject to the draft." That is, in fact, true; however, it is very likely that we shall soon have an all-volunteer army. Even in the absence of a volunteer

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Equal Rights Amendment EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Distortion à la Schlafly

JOAN KRAUSKOPF

The law teacher had just finished taking part in a panel discussion on the Equal Rights Amendment; she had played the part of the *opposition* because the sponsors claimed they had contacted many persons publicly opposed but could get none to appear that night.

It had been a little hard to take that side because she didn't know for sure what the Stop ERA people were claiming. The sudden opposition in Missouri seemed to have arisen full blown from nowhere. All those legislators who had so complacently assured the League of Women Voters and other sponsors of the ERA in November that they would support the Equal Rights Amendment were backing off, hedging. Their mail had recently and inexplicitly turned overwhelmingly negative.

What had happened?

The teacher wandered out of the empty auditorium and noticed a pamphlet on a lobby table. Hmmm - it was by The Committee for the Protection of Women and Children and contained arguments against the ERA. Wish I'd had this before the program started! What's this . . . ? The pamphlet said that under the ERA "every mother will lose her right to be supported by her husband unless she has preschool children, and she even loses . . . [that right] . . . if child care centers are available," quoting Phyllis Schlafly Report, Nov. 1972.

Where did they ever get a crazy idea like that? And the teacher scribbled "False" in the margin and headed for her car.

On the long drive home she reviewed the fairly extensive research she had done on sex discrimination and the law during the past year and she thought about family law as she usually taught it in the law school.

Yes, the husband does have the duty of support now as long as the marriage continues no matter how much money the wife may have. But he's also head of the household and, as such, he determines the standard of living they have. As long as he barely supports them so that he's not guilty of the crime of nonsupport, there isn't anything the wife can do to make him support them better. Well, she could get a divorce or leave him and then a court might order better support. Our law forces a woman to break up a family in order to enforce so-called rights of full support. What that means is that a wife who wants to remain with her husband

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Stalking the ERA

JOE SEDEY

As one who studiously avoids movements, who harbors sneaking suspicions about anything that can motivate groups of people *en masse*, I cannot claim to have done a great deal of work towards the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. That credit belongs to my wife; I have merely written a few letters, licked a few stamps, and answered an impressive number of telephone calls. Even from these fringes of involvement, however, I have seen enough to amaze me. I was amazed to find that ratification would be a struggle, more amazed to find how irrational that struggle would be.

Missouri seemed to be moving easily towards ratification; less than six months ago, a poll of state legislators showed a healthy majority favoring it. Then the anti-ERA forces began to make themselves heard. Taking a leaf from the radicals' book, groups of Missouri women brought in "outside agitators" to work themselves up to a proper pitch of outrage. They wrote letters, made phone calls, appeared on radio and television. The ERA had suddenly become an issue.

Their apparent leader, Phyllis Schlafly, lives just across the river, in Alton, Illinois. There, she tells us, she has six wonderful children and a wonderful husband. There, Mrs. Schlafly has enjoyed the kind of happy domestic life that she so energetically proselytizes around the nation. She makes housewifery seem a joy, certainly important, perhaps holy. It is all very tempting. If I could borrow her cook and housekeeper, I wouldn't mind trying it myself, although I've always thought of myself as having few domestic aptitudes, and fewer domestic urges.

The Committee Hearings

The first big showdown between the opposite sides of the ERA issue took place in Jefferson City, at the Senate and House hearings. The Judiciary Committee hearings were intriguing. The galleries were crowded, every inch of space was taken. Witness after witness took the stand. It became very clear that this was not the night for logic.

Those supporting the ERA were forced on to the defensive immediately, not by virtue of facts, but by a skillful tugging at emotions. The legislators were fairly caught. What man could object to the glowing compliments heaped upon him? What male could fail to respond chivalrously to

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Far From Dead in Missouri

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office: Sue Shear as a liberal Democrat who took a strong stand on women's issues and won; Phyllis Schlafly as an ultra-conservative, Goldwater Republican who lost.

Though only a freshman, Sue Shear has laid siege like a pro. Her current parlay is with veteran Representative Howard Hines, Chairman of the House Constitutional Amendments Committee. He assigned the ERA to an interim sub-committee appointed to study the effects of the amendment in Missouri. This is a traditional means for burying an issue. However, in this case, there is a great deal of pressure to bring it back to the full committee where there are more than enough "yes" votes.

Assuming it will get to the floor of the House, there is still much opposition to overcome before it will come to a vote. The current feeling among many uncommitted representatives is against having to vote at all on this issue. Why should they get entangled in the controversy only to have the measure lost in the Senate.

The day of the Senate hearings, the ERA received a double assault in the Judiciary Committee. Senator Lawrence Lee wanted to amend the ERA to state that the rights referred to would "begin at conception." (I was not aware that male and female fetuses received different treatment under the law.) Any change in the wording of the amendment would effectively kill it. Another method used to defeat bills is to table them. Committee Chairman Senator Maurice Schechter, determined to stop the ERA, took this approach.

Both of the above attempts failed, and the Senate committee simply voted against the ERA, 7 to 3. Missouri was immediately reported as having rejected the amendment. Actually, by being defeated in this way, the ERA can be brought up at any time for reconsideration.

Thus from one point of view, the ERA is in a hopeless position in Missouri - buried by the committees in both houses. The ERA proponents, however, have not conceded defeat. They could simply regroup and come back hard next year, but it is believed to be strategically better to attack this year while the opposition, in thinking they have won, can possibly be caught off guard. They have instituted a simultaneous effort to have the amendment reconsidered by the Senate Committee, at the same time trying for ratification in the House.

Marcia Mellitz is a microbiologist and chairperson of St. Louis WPC Equal Rights Amendment committee.

What's in It for Black Women?

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army, however, we should note that only one percent of eligible men in this country have ever served in combat, and that those chosen for combat are selected on the basis of fitness. We should be aware of the route out of poverty which the army has provided for many men through its opportunities for occupational training, as well as schooling and mortgages financed under the GI Bill. At present, women are effectively excluded from these opportunities in view of the ceiling on female participation in the armed services, differential entry requirements for women, and differential benefits for women.

- "Women will lose the benefits they have gained under state protective labor legislation." Such legislation has, in fact, operated in many instances to deprive working

Discrimination in Education

Women account for 51% of the population, and yet women today receive only one of every three of the BA's and MA's, and one in ten of the PhD's. Those women who do hold college degrees on the average earn less than male high school dropouts.

In 1968, 18% of the men entering public four-year colleges had a high school grade point average of B+ or better; 41% of the freshman women had attained such grades. In 1970, over 40% of the males aged 18-21, and over 20% of the males aged 23-24, were enrolled in college; comparable figures for females were 29% and 9% respectively. About 50% of the girl high school graduates go to college, as compared to nearly 70% of the boys. Between 75 and 90% of the well-qualified students who do not go on to higher education are women.

women by restricting the hours they may work (although housewives manage to work an average of 99.6 hours a week), by requiring the employer to provide certain benefits which then became an excuse for not hiring women, and in other ways. In any event, the legislation has seldom covered the poorest working women, those in service occupations such as household employment, an occupation painfully familiar to many black women.

- "Women will lose the benefits of alimony and child support." Very few women today request alimony, fewer still are awarded alimony, and fewer still receive it. When it is granted, often it is necessary because the wife must pay off the ex-husband's debts in which she became involved; and sometimes, alimony has been substituted for child support payments because the ex-husband can take a tax deduction for alimony payments, which he cannot take for child support payments. Alimony would not be abolished under the Equal Rights Amendment but simply would be equally available to men. The award of alimony would be based, most likely, on marital contribution and the ability to pay.

The Equal Rights Amendment would prohibit assumptions about who is the proper guardian for children in a divorce case, but would require, in each case, that the welfare of the child be the sole criterion in determining child custody. Undoubtedly, mothers would continue to be awarded the children in most cases. Child support obligations would be determined for both spouses in accordance with their means. At present, most studies show that child support payments by the father represent less than half of the actual cost of rearing the child, and that the majority of fathers are not complying with support orders.

The Importance of ERA to Blacks

Once black women know the facts regarding the Equal Rights Amendment, there is no question but that they will support its ratification. The strength of our support depends upon the extent of our knowledge.

For example, some states have special sentencing provisions for women convicted of crimes, sentencing provisions different from those provided for men convicted of the same crime. Longer sentences are sometimes automatically provided by statute, and sometimes the law permits judges to place women in a separate correctional status in which the length of sentences is determined by correctional authorities. Given the conditions in which many black people live and how those conditions breed crime, and given the greater likelihood of arrest and conviction of black people,

the double jeopardy in which black women are placed by laws which discriminate on the basis of sex is apparent. The Equal Rights Amendment would invalidate such laws.

Double jeopardy is the real issue which we must address. I am not suggesting that black women declare, "I am a woman first and Black second," or even the reverse, but simply that we recognize that we are caught in two groups which have been assigned inferior status in this society. We achieve little by comparing the severity of the wound which is inflicted on the basis of race versus that inflicted on the basis of sex. Sufficient to say that Equal Rights Amendment ratification would assist in preventing the wounding which is being done on the basis of sex, and which comes down most heavily on non-white women.

Black women have always been "working women." Apart from whether we wish to acquire the sole status of housewife, the fact is that the highest unemployment rate in the nation is among non-white women, ages 16-21. The fact is that 57 percent of all non-white women ages 25-34 work, and that 60 percent of all non-white women ages 45-54 work. The benefits which the Equal Rights Amendment can provide with regard to our ability to obtain a job, to receive adequate pay and benefits, to be afforded the opportunity for mobility, are critical. For example, training sponsored by the Federal government in programs such as the Job Corps and the Work Incentive Program for welfare recipients most often channel women into low-paying jobs without a future, such as nurses aid, secretary, and food handler. In contrast, men are more often provided opportunities for training for better paying jobs with a future, such as electronics workers and auto mechanics. Since many of us are responsible for the sole support of our families (27 percent of female headed households are black, and 54 percent of these have incomes below the poverty level), we must address the twin-headed monster - racism and sexism - which prevents us from doing so adequately.

The issue is choice: society and its institutions must not limit any of us, but must permit us to fulfill our potential, whatever color, whatever sex we are. The Fourteenth Amendment has been of crucial importance in achieving whatever gains we, as black people, have made. While it has not eliminated racism, it has provided a legal basis for doing so. The Equal Rights Amendment will provide women a status as persons under the law.

Opposition to the Amendment has grown recently and is evidently well organized and well funded. Ratification this year is critical, since few Constitutional amendments have been ratified once two years elapsed after passage by the Congress. I urge all black women to actively lobby their state legislatures to ratify the Amendment.

Frankie Freeman is an attorney and member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission.

Distortion à la Schlafly

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has no legally enforceable right to help determine the destiny of the family. Her homemaking efforts, even if they are 80 hours a week, do not entitle her to a commensurate share in her husband's earnings.

Two Legal Heads of the Family

As the car nosed into the driveway, she thought: that pamphlet misses the whole point.

Sure the ERA will require that a man and wife have equal rights and duties to support of the family, but it will require the law to recognize that a homemaker's services are of value and that they constitute the homemaker's contribution to the family support. It has to mean that the

husband is no longer head of the family because the homemaker will have to be given equal rights to influence how the family lives and how its money is spent. Instead of losing protections the wife stands to gain the right to have her homemaking services recognized as legally valuable. It's about time the law opened its eyes to the fantastic economic and social value of homemaking. The ERA just might be the way.

In the carport now as she switched off the ignition, the mental gymnastics stopped with the question: how can I be so sure of this? Then it came back bright and clear. As any law school student knows, when the meaning of a legislative enactment is doubtful, you look to the legislative history of it to see if a solution is there. What was said on the floor of Congress in debate and by the majority of the committee that reported the enactment to the main legislature are the most important evidence of what it means.

There was the Senate Judiciary Committee's report to the Senate of the 92nd Congress, the one that had finally

Divorce

Monetary divorce awards are the least complied with and the least enforced of all cases outside small claims courts. Ironically, the women most penalized by this non-compliance are the housewives and mothers who have devoted themselves to their families for 15-20 years or more instead of developing their earning power. An ex-wife's chance of obtaining alimony statistically is very small except among the wealthy. In 12,000 Chicago divorces, for example, only 7% of the wives even asked for post-divorce alimony. These findings assume even greater significance when the 80% increase in divorces in the last decade is considered.

Table I punctures the myth of the alimony-paying American male. Even when there are children, too few fathers have any desire to assume the burden of child care.

What is the rate of alimony payment? About 27% of judges allot only 25% or less of the father's income to child support; 34% allot between 26-35%; and 25% allot between 34-50%.

Years since court order	Number of open cases	Full Compliance	Partial Compliance	No Compliance	Non-paying fathers against whom legal action was taken
One	163	38%	20%	42%	19%
Two	163	28%	20%	52%	32%
Three	161	26%	14%	60%	21%
Four	161	22%	11%	67%	18%
Five	160	19%	14%	67%	9%
Six	158	17%	12%	71%	6%
Seven	157	17%	12%	71%	4%
Eight	155	17%	8%	75%	2%
Nine	155	17%	8%	75%	0%
Ten	149	13%	8%	79%	1%

Table I is from an article by Nagel and Weitzman in "Women as Litigants" (*Hastings Law Journal*, November, 1971). It is based on data gathered by Kenneth Eckhardt from a sample of fathers who were ordered to pay some child support in a divorce decree in a metropolitan county in the State of Wisconsin in 1955.

In the common law states, a married woman is entitled to that which she would own were she single. The problem is that the homemaker has little chance to lay aside a nest egg for herself, and she only has limited rights to her husband's property. In the community property states, of which there are eight, the husband has the exclusive right to control and manage the property. Only Texas and Washington have seen fit to change this.

Discrimination Among School Administrators

While 75% of the teachers in public elementary and secondary schools are women, only 22% of the elementary school and only 4% of the high school principals are women. Of roughly 15,000 school district superintendents in the country, only four are women.

passed the ERA, in the briefcase on the car seat. She took it in the kitchen and reread what it said about family support:

The support obligation of each spouse would be defined in functional terms based, for example, on each spouse's earning power, current resources, and nonmonetary contributions to the family welfare . . . where one spouse is the primary wage earner and the other runs the home, the wage earner would have a duty to support the spouse who stays home in compensation for the performance of her or his duties.

That's why the statement in the pamphlet was so obviously false. Wonder if those people who wrote it were lying? Maybe they just didn't know about what really happened in Congress the year the ERA was passed. But if the homemakers of Missouri believe that falsehood, no wonder they're suddenly writing to the members of their legislature.

Schlafly's Selective Testimony

The next day when the teacher had to testify in the Missouri legislative hearings she tried to explain that the statement was untrue, but she went a bit easy on it. You don't want to call people liars when you don't know the source of the idea they expressed or how widely they've spread it.

Later, knowing there would be no chance for rebuttal, those who had testified for the ERA watched the opponents. In the Senate committee, Phyllis Schlafly, dressed in an exquisitely tailored stylish outfit, imperious and dramatic in her presentation, read triumphantly from a legal encyclopedia that a husband has the duty to support his wife according to their station in life. The teacher noticed that she left out all the parts about the husband being the one who decides what that style should be. And then even more impressively came the edict that all women would have to work under the ERA and this was so because Paul Freund, renowned constitutional law authority, had said so in an article in volume 6 of the *Harvard Civil Rights Law Review*.

The teacher nearly leaped to her feet shouting, "That's the answer to the mystery." She could explain it all if only she had a chance. But there was no chance. A scribbled note to the Senator representing the bill saying desperately, "Ask her when that article was written," just didn't work. He couldn't imagine why anyone would want such a question asked and so he didn't.

The Equal Rights Amendment had been presented in every Congress for 50 years and always the complaint was made that no one had carefully analyzed various laws to determine how this Amendment would affect them, including family laws. This was one reason Paul Freund opposed the amendment. In March 1971, he published the little article Schlafly had referred to and gave examples of how it seemed the Amendment could be interpreted since there was no other legislative history indicating what its application should be. He did give the example of women having to work.

The teacher had read that article a year ago and almost forgotten about it. Why? It was printed a whole year before the 92nd Congress. The 92nd Congress had finally been given the careful and thorough analysis that Freund and others had said was necessary.

A month after Freund's article, the most important publication in regard to the Equal Rights Amendment was printed in Volume 80 of the *Yale Law Journal* written by three students and Professor Thomas Emerson, another constitutional law authority. That long and exhaustive analysis of how the Amendment would change other laws was printed entirely in the *Congressional Record* and was cited by both the Congressional proponents and opponents of the Amendment as its definitive analysis. With such an analysis before it for the first time the United States Congress finally passed the Equal Rights Amendment and did it overwhelmingly. That article stated at page 946:

" . . . if one spouse were a wage earner and the other spouse performed uncompensated domestic labor for the family, the wage-earner spouse would owe a duty of support to the spouse who worked in the home.

In a nutshell, Freund's statement was no longer relevant, and if applied to the ERA as passed in the 92nd Congress was wholly untrue. But the Missouri Senate committee didn't know that.

Misstatements Repeated Ad Nauseum

And so six days passed in which the opponents were notified of their misuse of Freund, but when the House hearings reopened they said the same thing again. Only this time it was Mr. Schlafly, an attorney. At least he was questioned about the out-of-date nature of Freund's statement. But when the teacher saw him on television news the next night the only part broadcast to the people of Missouri was his charming smile and sincere sounding statement that the ERA would surely require women to work and contribute 50 percent of the family income. And the next day,

Discrimination in Law

The only legal right guaranteed all women by the U.S. Constitution is the right to vote, and it is guaranteed by the Suffrage Amendment, passed only in 1920. The U.S. Supreme Court steadfastly has deferred to the state legislatures the problems posed by sex discrimination.

A woman is a child in the eyes of the law. A married woman's domicile is considered to be her husband's, even for the purposes of paying taxes and voting. Even though women have both a right and a duty to jury service, the Missouri Constitution gives women an optional exemption; and in Florida, women must register before they can be considered for jury duty.

The so-called legal right to support that a woman "enjoys" is enforceable only when she files for divorce, separation or separate maintenance. Her statutory right to "adequate" support is dependent on her husband's interpretation of the word adequate.

In Missouri, no business may knowingly employ a woman three weeks before or three weeks after she gives birth. A pregnant woman is not eligible for unemployment compensation benefits three months before or four weeks after giving birth, even for illnesses not relating to the pregnancy.

Women in Missouri are prohibited by law from mining or working around moving machinery. A woman may not be employed as a police officer in cities of less than 500 population.

Women are arrested for four times as many sex offenses as men are. Part of the problem is that crimes, i.e. prostitution, often are defined in such a way that only women can be guilty of them. Typically men as patrons are not punished. There often is a disparity in the kinds of sentences provided for men and women.

sure enough, at a meeting with a women's church organization the members told her they wouldn't want the ERA if that were true. Well, the teacher wouldn't either. But it isn't true.

How does one let the people of Missouri, especially the homemakers, know they have been duped by clever distortions? Once again heading for home and family in the car, the teacher was thinking. The organized women's groups who have been in favor of the ERA have to get on the ball. Write letters to the legislators? Well, OK. But it takes a lot of letters to equal those coming from thousands who have heard these truly frightening distortions of what the ERA would do. Lack of knowledge and fear can only be fought with information and reassurance. The fear has grown because the proponents of this Amendment were not out there informing the public in the first place. Maybe it takes a door-to-door campaign or neighborhood coffees or street demonstrations, but women in "the movement" need to move. *They need to let the homemakers and mothers of Missouri know that the Equal Rights Amendment means not destruction of homemaking and weakening of the family, but recognition of the value of homemaking services*

Discrimination in Professions

Women make up less than 4% of lawyers and professors, and only 7% of all doctors. Women are 1% of engineers, 2% of business executives, and 4% of top federal civil servants. Women are 3% of the U.S. Congress, and currently there are no women in the U.S. Senate. 46.4% of all American women aged 18-65 work outside the home; 75% of these workers are in routine clerical, sales and semi-skilled operative jobs, or they are household workers, cleaning women, or hospital attendants. The federal government rates the occupations of foster mother, child care attendant, home health aide, nursery school aide and housemaid, below those of dog trainer, hotel clerk, and barber, in terms of complexity.

In 1968, almost one sixth of all working women who had completed four years of college were non-professional. (The average woman worker has completed 12.5 years of school; the average man, 12.4.) 66% of the Black female work force are in the lowest paid occupations of all.

Women who hold full-time jobs earn approximately 60% of what men earn. A woman averages \$115 monthly Social Security benefits; a man, \$145, an obvious reflection of the differential in earning power. The median earnings of year-round full-time workers in 1967 was \$7,182 for men, \$4,150 for women. Less than 3% of these women earned salaries of \$10,000 or more; the proportion for men was 23%. Half of all working women earn less than \$3,700. In Chicago, an analysis of employment discrimination among ten city departments showed that 81% of all full-time employees receiving less than \$8,000 are women, while 90% of all employees receiving more than \$14,000 are men.

Beginning male accountants average \$845 a month; women, \$793. The gap is \$14 a month for chemists, \$30 a month for mathematicians and statisticians.

Women in business in Missouri are "small business" women. Of the 55 kinds of firms represented, beauty parlors leads the list. Next comes ladies ready-to-wear, florists, realtors, insurance, fabric shops, dry cleaners, gift shops and finally a small number of tax services, a motel, a farm, plus those few women who practice as physician, osteopath or chiropractor. Income is modest, with 62 "under \$7,500," 20 between \$7,600 and \$10,000, and 17 over \$10,000.

and, thus, strengthening of marriage as a partnership of two human beings equally valuable under the law.

Joan M. Krauskopf is a wife, mother, and professor of law at the University of Missouri Law School at Columbia.

Stalking the ERA

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the pleas for protection delicately offered by Mrs. Schlafly and her lieutenants? The chairman, Maurice Schechter, never got a chance to assume the air of impartiality one might have thought appropriate. Witnesses on behalf of the ERA were endured stoically, dismissed perfunctorily. Mrs. Schlafly's circle was thanked effusively. How good of them to have come. To have taken precious time from their families.

It is still hard to imagine that silver-haired Senator, that gentleman, writing to a constituent recently: "Madam what a joker you are to threaten me with political defeat! You attempted that last summer when you were moo-ing all over the Creve Coeur Township (in St. Louis County) for my opponent." The champion of chivalry was most quite to the manner born.

Grotesque Fears

The kinds of fears and apprehensions that had surfaced were grotesque. Communal washrooms were mentioned, in all seriousness. I had a sinking feeling that if I visited these women's houses, I would find the washrooms carefully labelled and segregated. I was afraid to imagine how they would react to air travel, with its common facilities. One woman, mistaking my wife for a Schlaflyite, told her in a conspiratorial whisper that everything was pointing in one direction - unisex. "Do you realize that the United Nations has just passed a law about it?" she asked. "It's called the Blob Law." It was hard to imagine that ham-strung and timid organization passing anything resembling a law, and we were momentarily nonplussed. Then came the realization. The "Blob Law" turned out to be a resolution aimed mainly at developing nations, advising them to make full use of their trained and educated women.

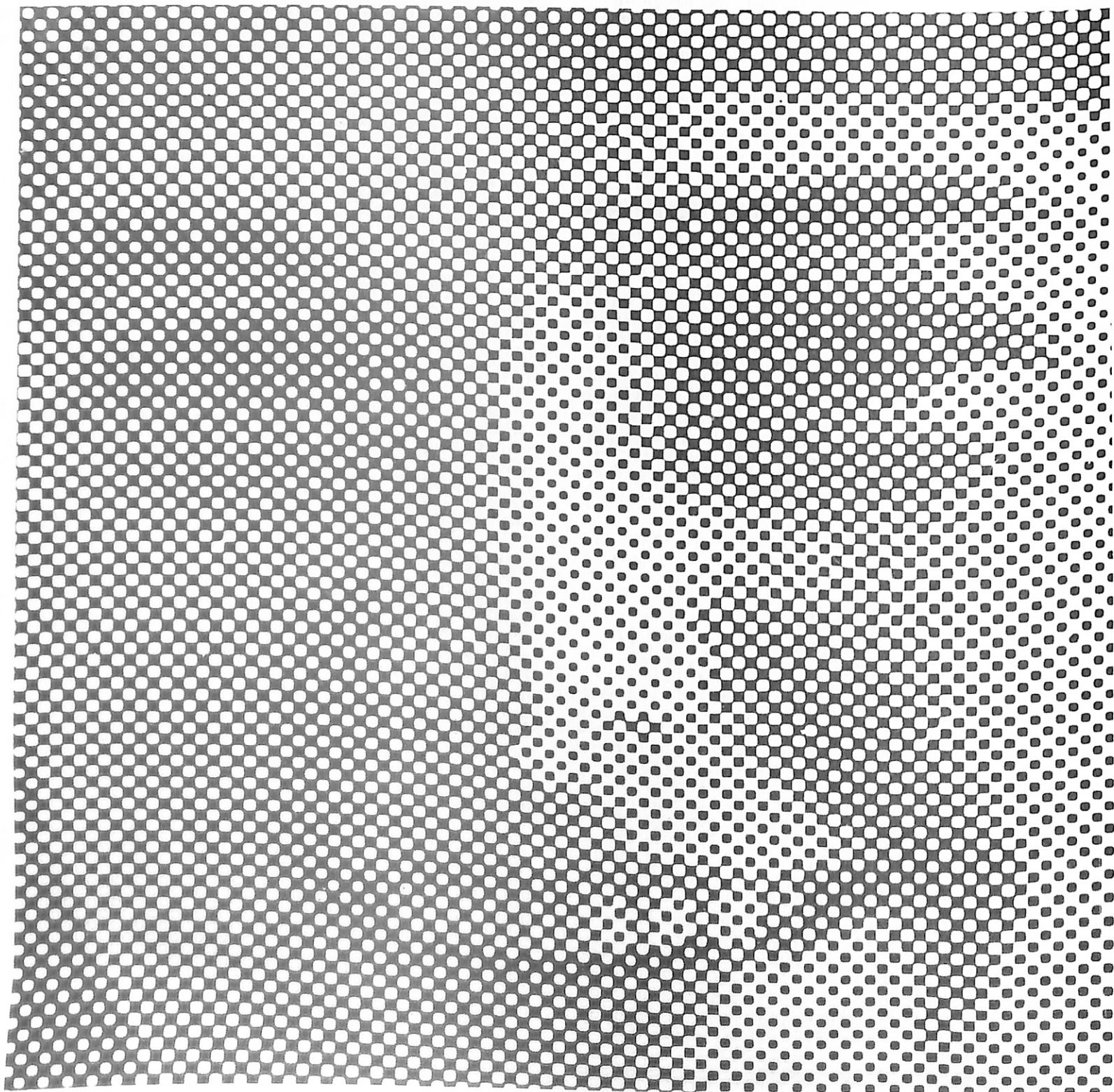
Even without venturing so far afield, it was obvious that many women were worried. Their children would be taken away. Their husbands would desert them and leave them penniless. Women would be marched off to the factories and made to work. It was a sobering sight; I should have expected that women with such glaring insecurities would have been far too self-conscious to parade them openly. Do so many women really believe that their husbands would desert them as soon as support laws were made less stringent?

Certainly, I have my own feelings of insecurity, but I have my pride as well. I just can't picture myself asking a legislature to pass or reject a law because my wife would leave me if she got the chance. How humiliating.

These last few months have indeed provided a liberal education - the kind that assembles thousands of observations, but leaves you still groping for a cohesive explanation. That men and women should resent attempts to legally delimit their home lives seems natural. That men should be reluctant to undermine a way of life that has always assured them a cook and a housekeeper seems at least understandable. But that women should actually rise up in significant numbers and demand to be confined to their homes seems incredible.

Joe Sedey is a Greyhound Bus dispatcher.

*Women
and
Religion*



Religious Women and the Movement

JULIA MAHONEY

Where are religious women with reference to the Women's Movement, as it gathers strength in voice, membership and effect today?

One would think the answer to be fairly simple. Because of the very nature of religious communities, religious women have had, for years past, many of the things their lay sisters are organizing to achieve. They have had a community of women to support them and to dialogue with them in and about their personal lives and their work. They have had, at least in a relative sense, a higher quantity and quality of education than their sisters from similar social and economic backgrounds. They have had high levels of responsibility to exercise, according to their talent and training, in the framework of the institutional church; they have operated schools and hospitals and colleges, orphanages, geriatric care facilities, and social service agencies of all sorts.

Reflecting on all that religious women have been able to do leads one ultimately to the question: why are they not now in the forefront of the movement, helping their sisters through doors they have been able to enter, more because they are religious than because they are women?

Once the question is asked, a flood of answers – at least partial answers – becomes apparent. Motive, environment, conditioning, and commitment – all seem related to the current stance of religious women regarding the Women's Movement.

Motive

Motive is primary of course. Religious women did, and to a large degree still do, a great deal of professional work for levels of compensation that would simply be unacceptable to movement leaders struggling to achieve the equal pay for equal work standards which should be a simple fact of life – given the Civil Rights Act of 1963. Religious women, on the other hand, never expected equal compensation for work they willingly took on as apostolic in nature, and in those times, with institutions rather well supported within the ecclesiastical bodies they served, they could afford the luxury.

Today, as schools close, colleges "secularize," and hospitals become big business enterprises with no built-in ecclesiastical guarantees, it is becoming clear that the communities being served can no longer pay the tab. At least one consequence of this development is the necessity of highly qualified religious women seeking positions with appropriate compensation, in order to maintain the institutions and to see to the well-being of the members of the communities

which staff them. It is often only when these religious women move into the job market and encounter closed doors (and minds) that they become aware of the plight of their sisters – admittedly, a long route to a fairly simple insight, but true nonetheless for many religious women.

Environment

Environment is another factor. The religious woman in America today has functioned for most of her life in an environment in which respect and even deference were hers automatically with the taking of the religious name and garb. True, along with that deference went a good deal of paternalism, but that was not too difficult to take when weighed against the deference (or even preference . . . free movies, if you like the Julie Andrews type; half-fare travel, however rare the trips; free or highly discounted medical care, if you could arrange non-emergency type illnesses during the school vacation, etc.). Quite honestly, paternalism was often not read in the situation at all, especially when someone labelled it for you in the more positive terms of "community caring" or "pastoral concern." That such "concern" often kept the religious woman in a schizoid balance between responsible adulthood in her work and passive dependent childhood in her personal life was another insight long in dawning. Once it dawned, it changed almost every dimension of her life: her understanding of obedience, of responsibility and accountability, of friendship and interpersonal relationships, and most of all, of herself as a full, valued, adult human person, female by birth and religious by choice.

As she begins to live out her life choice in accord with her newfound insights, she often loses the esteem and deference she could once presume. "Sister" is no longer predictable in action, identifiable in garb, or docile in her professional posture. She has taken the Second Vatican Council seriously, and has found that open windows and levelled walls have made her lot harder, but better. She must now win esteem and respect in her person and in her professional performance, and most religious women I know will choose it joyfully – the fruit of one's own labor being ultimately more satisfying than the unearned reward. In the struggle, the movement makes sense in a way that it never did when all was smooth and simple, when conflict was only selectively allowed in the environment of her life.

Conditioning

Conditioning in our culture is inescapable, even in the used-to-be sanctuary of convent life. Perhaps religious were

less conditioned, culturally, when there were greater restrictions on their access to media. When I was a novice, newspapers were taboo; films and television were strictly for educational purposes, a condition which continued into early professional years. I had a full ten years in which I was not subjected to the frivolous and often infuriating female myths that abound on the tube and in the slick magazines. It would be an illusion, however, to suggest that religious women were exempted from the tacit message American society has communicated in the past several decades concerning "woman's place" and the roles she may choose without risking social acceptability. Even the emergence of the so-called "new nun" after Vatican II had us caught in new stereotypes — bubble-gum chewing, baseball-bat wielding swingers of a pathetic sort, children of another growth. The glamor of it was short-lived, but it lasted long enough to crystallize into several new socially acceptable, if not terribly rewarding, "Sister" images. [If I seem to speak harshly, it is not out of disillusionment (for that can be survived — indeed, must be survived, no matter what lifestyle and commitment one chooses). The reality that comes to seem so harsh lies for me in the fact that religious communities were so little able to transcend the oppressive character of the culture in which they existed — and yet, how could that be surprising, since communities consist of the people that constitute the same culture? Reality impinges on idealism everywhere, and so, why not here?]

Commitment

Commitment is perhaps the only concept that can address itself to the parenthetical reflection above, and with it, we come full circle to where we began to reflect on religious women in relation to the women's movement. Perhaps she seems uninvolved because her commitment has led her to struggle within another, even an overlapping sphere. Perhaps it is the totality of her commitment in the religious sphere which limits her involvement in the wider one. Perhaps it is even the *yes* of her commitment, causing her to live rather quietly with a good deal of frustration because she has said *yes*, that makes the more frantic manifestations of the movement seem distasteful to her. Some symptoms of the movement do come across that way, do seem to tend toward the selfish, do smack of hostility toward men and marriage and motherhood, do even seem contemptuous of her motives for choosing celibacy, do, in other words, carry the usual characteristics of a social movement, with its inevitable blind spots. But she needs to encounter at least some of those balancing charac-

teristics which do not as readily make the news. She needs to encounter the movement in persons who respect and value her commitment, as has been my happy lot. And when she does, her commitment will be at the service of the movement, as of other human needs.

Until then, what? Have I seemed to suggest that religious women will buy into the Women's Movement only when all the lines are blurred between themselves and their "worldly" sisters? Far from it. Such total blurring of lines seems neither necessary nor desirable. The recognition of commonalities never implies obliterating differences except to those desperate for belonging at any cost, and that is not, to my mind, where religious women are today. Their relationship to the Movement has many possibilities. Each has much to give to the other, but I do not expect a total identification at any point in time.

What can the Movement expect of religious women? Several responses suggest themselves to me. I believe that the Movement can validly expect support and solidarity behind core issues of justice: equal opportunity, non-discriminatory treatment, full and adult personhood for all. The Movement can expect strong resistance to other issues less clearly defined in relation to moral choice and respect for human life; the issue, for instance, for abortion-on-demand. The Movement has the right, at all times and regarding all issues, to expect concern and respect for the persons representing those issues, for the *yes* of her religious commitment implies the determination to render justice to all, in a loving manner which reflects her belief in a loving Father who is acting through her in his world.

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Secondary Status

PAULA E. HYMAN

Instead of being considered a provocative challenge and an opportunity for examination of the tradition in a new light, the feminist critique of Judaism has evoked responses which distort the role of women in Judaism as radically as the sharpest feminist attack. What is most striking, though, is their insensitivity to the basic premise of feminist analysis.

Jewish feminists have not rejected Judaism; we are struggling with it in our desire to find a way to fulfill ourselves as Jews and as women. Had we rejected Judaism, we would hardly be spending so much of our time living, studying, discussing and thinking about it. Which is not to say that we do not find much of Jewish tradition problematic, hardly a new situation for the modern Jew of either sex.

The central point of the feminist critique of Judaism, as of all other patriarchal cultures, is traditional sex-role differentiation. In patriarchal cultures virtually all social roles and most character traits are ascribed according to sex, with the positions of highest status and the most highly prized characteristics, such as intelligence, initiative, emotional strength, reserved for men. While men are allowed to define themselves through a wide spectrum of activity in the world (and in Judaism, in the synagogue as well), women are defined in socio-biological terms as wife and mother, and relegated almost exclusively to home and family life. The only qualities considered "feminine" (and hence approved in women) are those useful in the serving, nurturing, and home-making roles which are the woman's preserve.

The position of women in Judaism rests upon this patriarchal sex-role differentiation and the concomitant disparagement of women. Thus, women are exempt from all positive time-bound *mitzvot* (good deeds) because of the nature of their family obligations, (though these may be shared with husbands or demand no more time than male occupa-

The Role of Jewish Women

Accepted as Equals

RONA M. FIELDS

"Susie Cohen for President of the U.S.A.," you tell me.

And why not? From an historical perspective it is more probable that a Susie Cohen would be president of the United States than it would be for a Martha Mitchell, for instance!

A social scientist could very well classify the daughters of Israel as having been the first liberated women. This is in sharp contrast with the fictitious Molly Goldbergs, Mrs. Portnoys and *bubbeimeisters*. In Biblical, Talmudic and Rabbinic literature, there are no such creatures. There are instead, women who are integral human beings with legal, moral and ethical capabilities and responsibilities equivalent to those of men. In the very beginning, in Genesis, it is said: "God created man and woman in His image" (Gen. 1:27). Both men and women are thus akin to God in their spiritual nature; both are invested with the same authority to subdue the earth and have dominion over it.

The social role differences between the sexes, have, in Judaic law, been predicated only upon the exigencies of biological and geographic conditions. In Judaic law women's participation in the decision-making processes is guaranteed through the axiomatic position that a woman has the right to control the use of her own body. The limitations of her control are the limitations imposed by her biological processes in reproduction.

In fact, it is expected that women will participate in the decision-making process in every sphere ranging from choice of marriage partner to the survival and even the triumph of her nation from Genesis through the Rabbinic papers of correspondence.

The woman in Israel is not presented merely as mother and/or wife. The Matriarchs - Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah - are not depicted as brood mares, nor as beautiful, bunny-like sex objects. They are presented as companions

tional responsibilities). Since they are not *halakhically* (traditionally) required to participate in communal prayer three times a day, women cannot, in traditional Judaism, be counted in a *minyan* (prayer quorum of ten) or, as representative of the community, lead a service. Choosing to perform *mitzvot* does not raise one to the *halakhic* status of those obliged to do so. But the exclusion of women from ritual activity goes even further. Within the framework of traditional Judaism, women are not independent legal entities. Like the minor, the deaf-mute and the idiot, they cannot serve as witnesses in a Jewish court, except for a few specified cases. They do not inherit equally with male heirs; they play only a passive role in the Jewish marriage ceremony; and they cannot initiate divorce proceedings. True, certain communal safeguards were instituted to apply pressure to a recalcitrant husband to compel him to give his wife a *get* (divorce). However, at times the safeguards have failed to serve their purpose, and at all times the woman seeking a Jewish divorce must passively await the male decree. Neither marriage nor divorce is a reciprocal act for man and woman within Jewish law.

Women Need Not Study

By exempting women from time-bound positive *mitzvot* – the three positive *mitzvot* generally considered as women's being *challa* (the separation of a bit of dough to prepare the Sabbath loaves), kindling the Sabbath candles, and *niddah* (the laws of family purity) – and by denying them legal independence, Judaism relegated women to second-class status. Within the family the woman may have had a necessary and noble task to fulfill. But the heart and soul of traditional Judaism remained communal prayer and study, pursuits almost exclusively of men. No wonder, then, that Jewish sages from Rabbi Eliezer to Maimonides considered

women as frivolous, ignorant beings, wasting their husbands' time, for they were not engaged in that most worthy and significant of Jewish endeavors, sacred study.

No wonder, then, that the birth of a male child was cause for celebration, the birth of a female, for stoic acceptance. It is a distortion of Jewish history to claim that Judaism was truly ambivalent in its attitude towards education for women. Such equivocation as is reflected in the sources is merely whether women should be left illiterate or not; the *dominant* theme in Talmudic and Rabbinic literature is not to educate women to the same level as men. Men and women, after all, were educated for different roles. So the *yeshiva* (religious academy) and *beit-midrash* (House of learning) were male monopolies.

It is at this point that the apologist will trot out the great women of Sunday School texts, most commonly Deborah, Esther, and Bruriah. The advanced student of Jewish history can add a few more exceptional women, such as Mibtahiah of the fifth century B.C.E. Elephantine colony, or the scholarly daughter of Maimonides' twelfth-century opponent, Samuel ben Ali, or a number of educated women in Renaissance Italy. Thus, we have a handful of token women bearing on their frail shoulders the apologists' argument that within Judaism women could attain positions of authority and influence comparable to those of men. A handful of women throughout a period of some thirty-five hundred years of Jewish history! In historical terms, these most exceptional of women, born of unique historical circumstances, are: Deborah, active in the period of early Israelite religion, before strict monotheism eliminated the last vestiges of the female figure from religious life, serving as her people's judge and leader; Mibtahiah, living in a marginal community cut off from normative Judaism, where women could engage in independent business activities in their

whose wisdom, commitment and sense of justice enable a small, nomadic tribe to develop and practice a unique, unconventional social and political system. It is clear that they are not interchangeable bodies nor incubators for assuring the line of descent, but had value as persons. Sarah's infertility did not disqualify her from her position as the companion and confidante of Abraham. Hagar's fertility did not alone make her worthy of leadership. The message is repeated in the story of Hannah who wept because she was childless and was told by Alkanah, her husband, that she need not weep for she was dear to him (1 Sam. 1:8).

Let the role of wife be viewed as the vicarious route for the contribution of the woman in Israel, we are reminded very clearly in the introduction of Deborah:

Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time – and she sent and called Barak... (Judges 1:1)

Deborah's role – her glory – was unrelated to her condition as a wife of Lapidoth. That was incidental. Her primary identity was as a prophetess, a judge, in Israel. The difference between the role of the woman in Israel and her sisters in the surrounding countries was even more apparent when Deborah questioned the probable propaganda effect on the enemy when they saw the army of Israel being led by a woman. In view of this, she suggested that she should, perhaps, not go forward. But God required that she lead, and that Sisera himself, the leader of the opposition, be finally destroyed by a woman. While Deborah unified the tribes of Israel and planned the battle strategy, it was left to another woman, Jael, to impart physically the death blow to Sisera. At the time of the Judges, the woman in Israel could be a leader, an arbitrator, a prophet and the destroyer

of those who would threaten the survival of Israel.

Even for that time, Deborah and Jael had not enacted a new role for women. Their actions were rooted in the earlier actions of Miriam:

And Miriam the prophetess, sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand – and Miriam sang unto them. (Exodus XV:20)

Miriam never enacted the part of the sycophant. She chose for herself what part she would play and herself suffered the punishments resulting from some of these actions. We learn that when she spoke against Moses she was punished with leprosy – an indication that in the eyes of God she carried full responsibility for her choice of actions and moral knowledge equal to anyone.

Bible Stresses Equality

The equality of the women of Israel, their position as full participants, was uncommon in the other societies of that time and place. This is further illustrated in another of the stories from the Book of Judges. The story of Samson is most frequently cited as an example of the treacherous nature of women – of their use of their bodies to ensnare and befoul men. This interpretation is first evidenced in the writings of those who were socialized in the Hellenic and Roman constructs of womanhood. It is not inherent in the Biblical context of the Hebrews.

Let's re-examine this story and its meanings. The angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah. Although she is not mentioned by name, it is apparent that she, as a person, is considered sufficiently wise and worthy to be approached singly with a plan for bearing and training a man who would embody a very special strength and potential. In so doing, she was recognized by the angel as the

own right and divorce their husbands; Samuel ben Ali, with no sons to educate raising his daughter to follow in his footsteps as a Rabbinic authority; upper class Jewish women in Renaissance Italy, profiting from the general rise in status of all wealthy women in this period. Of the oft-cited women in Jewish history, Esther and Beruriah attained immortality by excelling in traditional feminine roles. Esther traded on her beauty and charm to gain the king's favor, and thus was in a position to follow Mordecai's advice, save her people, and earn a place in Jewish history; while Beruriah's reputation rests as much upon her piety and devotion to her scholar husband as upon her scholarship (though the latter, too, was unusual for a woman). As colorful and rare as these personages were, they are mere tokens, and they in no way change the status of women in Judaism.

Male-defined Status

It is spurious to argue from these token women that for the Jewish woman who truly wanted it, success in the man's world was a real possibility. The processes of socialization being what they are, and the socio-economic conditions under which Jews have lived until the most recent times what they were, it is unlikely that large numbers of Jewish women longed for an equitable place in male society. Our expectations and desires alike are shaped by our vision of the possible, and until modern times, equality of men and women within Judaism would not have been encompassed by that vision. Yet, even if the vast majority of Jewish women throughout history have been satisfied with their role, this alters neither the objective position of women in Judaism nor our modern perception of that position as being one of second-class status.

According to the apologists, however, within the Jewish tradition women enjoyed a position of respect and honor.

determining agent for this event. It would be up to her to care for her own body in a special way to assure the perfection of this child. It would further be up to her to train the child appropriately. Finally, it was her wisdom to recognize the intent of the visitation and calm her husband's anxieties about it. This woman of Israel could thus be seen to be a self-directed person. She was a person whose insights could enlighten her masculine companion (Judges XIII:21-25). But this is also a story of contrasts. Samson took for a wife, a Philistine woman. The woman, made afraid by her countrymen, badgered Samson into betraying to her the answer to a riddle which she, out of fear, conveyed to them. This paragraph is frequently cited to document the perfidious nature of women and of wives (Judges XIV:15-19). But it is important to note that she was not a woman of Israel and that she was fearful. Finally, we note that her body was not her own; since, when after a period of anger and disgust Samson returned to claim her as his wife, he found that her father had "given her to another." She had no choice, was not asked and was simply a piece of property to be used. Of course, she had been unable to act on moral and ethical grounds; for only a *person* can feel willing and able to make moral choices!

And who was Delilah? Samson loved her, and in so doing, believed her to be her own person. He had not - even by then - realized that as a Philistine, she had been socialized neither to love nor to choose. Her countrymen saw Delilah as a body to be used, as another weapon in their war chest! To them, it was clear: she - a woman - could function only as a sex object for their purposes. Samson clearly did not recognize this cultural difference in the condition of women (he seemed somehow to lack any sociological sense), and he was, indeed, betrayed. Delilah never questions the authority of her countrymen. She never ex-

The virtuous woman was extolled: for her the *Eshet Hayil* was recited every Sabbath evening. Within her sphere, the home, the Jewish woman was placed on a pedestal. Her role was different from the Jewish male's but no less regarded. In fact, however, separate but equal, in this as in other areas, remains an ideal most difficult to realize. Generally, it has resulted in the dominant group's defining both the separateness and the equality of the second group, and justifying that separateness by projecting upon the group being defined a radical otherness. What this has meant in male-female relations is that the qualities of femininity have been defined by male culture in polar opposition to masculine traits. And uniquely female biological characteristics, in particular menstruation and child-bearing, have been perceived by men as both frightening and awesome, in no small measure because they are alien to male experience.

Within Judaism these attitudes have not precluded treating women with a full measure of humanity in familial relations, but they have given rise to the most rigid of stereotypes regarding the nature and duties of women. Thus, the Jewish woman, we are told, is responsible for the moral development of the family, being endowed with an exceptional capacity for moral persuasion. At the same time, however, the female in Judaism is regarded as inherently close to the physical, material world, while the Jewish male is immersed in the spiritual. Thus, conveniently, the male-female role division is perceived in the Jewish tradition as a most natural one, based as it is on the fundamental polarity of the male and female characters. The Jewish woman, therefore, is not spiritually deprived by her virtual exclusion from synagogue and study, for her spiritual capacity is inferior to the man's. Better for her to supply his and his children's needs, while he supplied her spiritual wants. A most efficient division of labor! And one which

presses her own doubts, concerns or wishes. She is an instrument, to be used. Contrast this with the much earlier statements of the Mosaic code which required that a woman in Israel consent before a sexual liaison could be effected, and even permitted her the right to divorce her husband if he did not please her (either sexually or in any other way!).

Contemporary divorce law in California, which allows for divorce by mutual consent, is not yet as radically feminist as was Leviticus, which also declared that a woman could not be divorced without her consent!

Pre-Hellenic Judaism Different

Historically, the position of the woman of Israel has been in sharp contrast to women of other nations. Pre-Hellenic Judaism reflects, even in exile, the basic condition of equality of the sexes. An example of this period may be found in the Book of Esther. Vashti, a Persian queen, has rejected the dictatorial right of her husband to command her presence. King Ahasuerus then became afraid that all wives would refuse to subordinate themselves to their husbands so he decreed that Vashti be put to death as an example (Esther I:13-22). In the face of this, it is the Jewish woman, Esther, who uses her position to make the choices and finally take the responsibility for the survival of the Jewish people. Esther had to subordinate herself to the legal code of the court. She could and did choose to act within it to assure the continuity of her people. In doing so, she changed the laws themselves. It is notable that she did this - in contrast with Delilah - by the use of her intellect and talents, not simply through becoming a sex object. That she was a sexually desirable woman is never denied; but that her sexuality was not her only purpose or capability is obvious.

explains the tendency which existed among Eastern European Jewry to relinquish responsibility for the physical support of the family to wives, while the husbands withdrew to the *beit midrash* to study and acquire spiritual merit for the entire family.

These imposed definitions of male and female within Judaism are particularly restrictive for women. It can be argued that there are few *halakhic* barriers to women taking upon themselves an ever greater role in Jewish religious life. Girls can, and do, study much the same curriculum as boys in institutions of Jewish learning, except for rabbinical schools. There is no *halakhic* rule barring women from laying *tefillin* (phylacteries). Yet the psychological effects of tradition and upbringing are difficult to overcome. A woman who has, throughout her life, come in contact with a synagogue whose ritual is reserved for men gets the message: she is not needed there. Quite literally, she does not count. And if she chances or chooses to be there, she must not disturb the proceedings but merely observe them. Even should she begin to feel the first stirrings of discontent, there is no easy way for her to chart her own course. Within the synagogue she has few role models, and mechanisms for change do not lie within her hands. Thus, the most educated and progressive Jewish woman who knows full well that her mastery of Hebrew and Jewish knowledge exceed that of the vast majority of Jewish men feels ill-at-ease the first time she has an *aliya* (being called to the Torah reading). If the synagogue is to be open to men and women on a basis of equality, then women must take a regular, rather than occasional, part in services as laymen as well as rabbis and cantors, and their participation must ultimately become both normal and normative. Only then will women truly have the freedom to choose, as men do, to participate or not.

Positive Attitude Towards Sexuality

Much has been made of the fact, and rightly so, that the Jewish tradition respects female sexuality and accords the right to sexual fulfillment to male and female alike. While it is well to distinguish the Jewish attitude to sexuality from the negative Christian attitude with which it is often wrongly identified, it is precisely in this area that the second-class status of women within Judaism is highlighted.

Jewish attitudes to sexual relations and to female biology were formulated early in the development of Judaism. The fact that Judaic culture was polygamous for much of its history has, as Dr. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin has noted, profoundly affected the Jewish legal concept of adultery. A married woman commits adultery when she has sexual relations with any man other than her husband, while a married man is legally an adulterer only when he becomes sexually involved with another man's wife! The attitude of the Jewish tradition to the menstruating woman – despite the modern rationalizations that the laws of Family Purity serve to safeguard the woman's health, to prevent sexual desire from becoming sexual license, or to keep marriage a perpetual honeymoon – reflects a primitive taboo. According to *halakhic* prescriptions, the menstruating woman, or *niddah*, is to have no physical contact whatsoever with a man. Contact with her is permitted only after she has been free of her "discharge" for seven days and has undergone *mikvah* (ritual bath). During her period of impurity anything she touches becomes impure. While this impurity is a legal rather than a hygienic concept and, according to rabbinic authorities, does not imply that the *niddah* is physically unclean or repugnant, it is not clear that simple Jewish men and women throughout the ages have interpreted the laws of Family Purity in such a disinterested

It is also not an accident of history that Jews have taken the lead in the struggle for social justice, for justice is the foundation of Judaism. Nor is it by accident that Jewish women have been leaders in this struggle. While President Nixon procrastinated over the appointment of a woman to the U.S. Supreme Court, we reflect on a three thousand year old memory of Deborah as Chief Justice in Israel.

While only two women in the entire United States have appointments as school superintendents, we reflect on the tradition of Hannah, the wife of Manoah, who made the decisions of how to educate children to become *savants* and leaders.

While politicians in the United States were hesitant to respond to the announced candidacy of Shirley Chisholm for President, Golda Meir has been Prime Minister of Israel and, over two thousand years ago, Queen Salome Alexandra reigned on the throne of a Jewish nation.

Miriam, alongside her brothers, is reckoned as one of the three emancipators from Egypt; Deborah was a leader in a war of independence; Huldah was a prophetess in the later centuries; and Maimonides supplied the healing arts under the tutelage of a Jewish woman physician!

Today's Status Reflects Graeco-Roman Philosophy

The status of women here and now stands out in sharp contrast to Judaic law, custom and practice. Although Judaic law has always been flexible and responsive to changes in social and biological conditions, the history of legislation and jurisprudence in Europe and the United States is rife with anachronisms. For instance, while the life expectancy of women has doubled or trebled since Biblical times, and in its entirety only a third of her life is within the limits of the reproductive cycle, civil law and social practice militate against the full participation of women in

the economic and political mainstream. This, despite the fact, that 35% of the heads of households in this country are women!

It is true that Rabbi Meir of Talmudic times inserted in the morning blessings a statement of gratitude for not being born a heathen, a slave or a woman. He had considerable difficulty, however, in justifying the last of these blessings and there was much debate over it. But perhaps he was reacting, not to the status ordained for Jewish women according to Mosaic law, but rather to the condition of degradation into which women were cast by civil law, then and since!

The Talmud, written during Hellenistic times, reflected some of the influences of Hellenic culture. In many ways, the current condition of women is closer to the condition of women in ancient Greece and Rome than it is to the position of women in Hebraic tradition. What could be more symbolic of this difference than the contrast between the Playboy Bunny – at once the epitome of St. Paul's description of the sinful temptress and the Greek Aphrodite – and the Jewish reverence for the creative productions of an Emma Lazarus?

The Jewish woman who conceives of her personhood as circumscribed by the biological conditions of mating and mothering is permitting herself to be defined by the preachings of Aristotle, Paul, Augustine and Martin Luther – all of whom have been clinically characterized as masogynists. The hegemony of Graeco-Roman philosophy over the mores and psyches of European civilization has resulted in the adulteration of the Jewish woman's potential for personhood. This has led, in turn, to the perversion of the Jewish egalitarianism that is represented by the infamous Mrs. Portnoy. The latter is the product of the struggle for physical safety and ethnic survival through centuries of per-

manner. Even the mere fact of legal impurity for two weeks of every month has involved many disabilities for a woman. And the psychological impact of the institution, especially in its strictest interpretation, upon a woman's self-esteem and attitude to her own body would seem to be harmful.

Although irrelevant and even totally unknown to the vast majority of young Jews, the laws of Family Purity remain fundamental to Orthodox Judaism. In Israel, where the Orthodox rabbinate enjoys a monopoly, each prospective bride receives a booklet instructing her in the importance of Family Purity and admonishing her that, according to a midrash, death in childbirth is a punishment for the abandonment of the laws of the *niddah*. To the modern woman, who knows that she is indisposed, at most, for a few hours a month, this type of reasoning is not only inaccurate but also offensive.

At the very least, leaders of Orthodox and Conservative Judaism should be willing to confront openly the issue raised by feminists regarding the laws of Family Purity. If within traditional Judaism, the essential separation of the *niddah* cannot be totally eliminated, based as it is on injunctions in the Torah, still, the more restrictive "fences around the Torah" should be lowered. Finally, the rationales for Family Purity should exploit neither medical fantasy nor sexual mythology.

What Jewish feminists are seeking, then, is not more apologetics but change, based on acknowledgement of the ways in which the Jewish tradition has excluded women from entire spheres of Jewish experience and has considered them intellectually and spiritually inferior to men. Realizing the historical, social, and biological factors which contributed in all generations to Jewish attitudes towards women, we must try to examine the Jewish tradition within its own context and refrain from pointlessly blaming our

ancestors for lacking our own insights. But until we all recognize that a problem exists — that the conflict between the objective reality of women's lives, self-concept, and education and their position within Jewish tradition is a most significant one for all of Judaism — we cannot begin to take steps to attain equality for women, both in Jewish law and in Jewish attitudes.

Much of the strength of the Jewish tradition has derived from its flexibility and responsiveness to the successive challenges of the environments in which it has been destined to live. In an age when the alienation of young Jews from Judaism is of major concern to the Jewish community, we can hardly afford to ignore fully one-half of young Jews. Thus, the challenge of feminism, if answered, and not dismissed as the whining of a few misguided malcontents, can only serve to strengthen Judaism.

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secution, pogroms and ghettoization which has very nearly reduced Jewish womankind to the position of breeder and feeder.

The creation and pioneering which took place in the new Jewish State of Israel revived the concept of equality between the sexes. When Jewish women work alongside men, plowing, planting and fighting for their homeland they set an example for women throughout the world.

In the twentieth century, the recognition of the equipotential of women for sexuality has required the scientific labors of Freud, the Kinsey researchers and, finally, the Masters and Johnson tedium. However, the anonymous scribes of Leviticus had recognized, endorsed and prescribed thousands of years ago for the equality and fulfillment of female sexuality.

Jewish women were exempted from the ritual ceremonial obligations placed on Jewish men, not because of inferiority, but because of the exigencies of their life-space. There were simply no ways for limiting and spacing pregnancies, nor other agencies to provide for the care of young children. Women seldom lived beyond their reproductive years. These facts of life made it impossible to regulate their time for participation in religious rituals and ceremonies. Again, we are reminded of Hannah, who could go up to Shiloh to pray so long as she was childless!

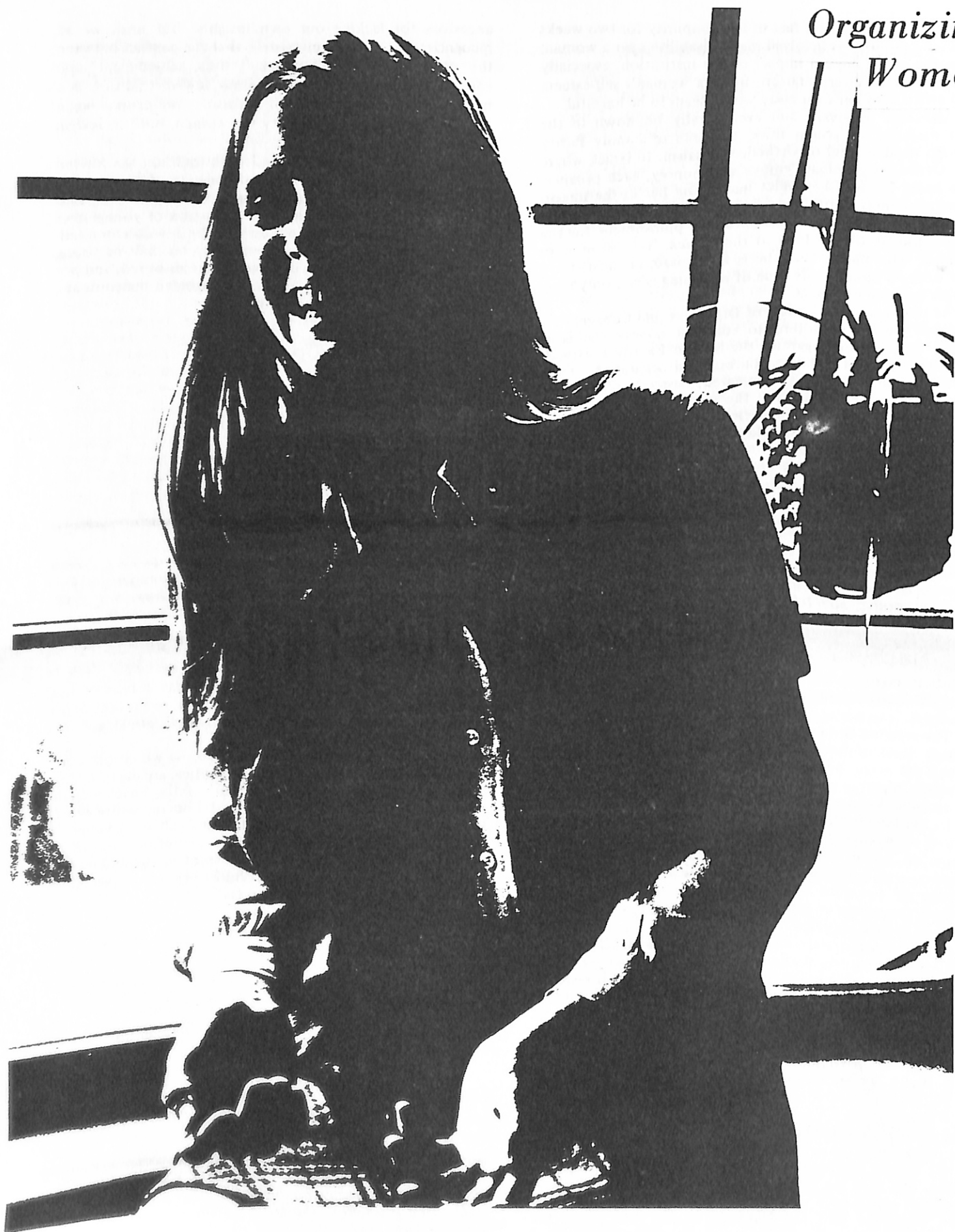
Women today are again recognizing that they are neither biologically determined nor anatomically destined. They are recognizing today that they are complete human beings — not merely receptacles for sperm nor objects for manipulation. But they are forced to tear away the layers of silken draperies which have shrouded their potency. Women have been socialized into the Philistine notion that power for self-determination is contingent upon the possession of masculine genitalia; that womanpower exists only for se-

duction; that decisionmaking, as Thomas Jefferson said should be done by men because "women, to prevent deprivation of morals and ambiguity of issues, should not mix promiscuously in gatherings of men."

The psychological and social pressures which influence women's activity, or lack of it, in politics, are derived from the personal acceptance *by women*, of the anachronistic, archaic and perverted definitions of human nature which have largely emanated from the unhealthy psyches of angry, celibate men! These pressures are not inherent in the nature of women; they are not inherent in the Judaic law; they owe their origins to the Philistines — and we know what Deborah did to the Philistines!

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*Organizing
Women*



Forward Planning

MARY-ANN LUPA

At this period of feminism we must look at the movement from the perspective of time. History judges our efforts. And history shows that stated goals, not yet cooled, rapidly receive acceptance by large numbers of women and men. This momentum pressures the movement into answering all challenges to equality and into trying to be a savior for everyone.

Can any movement, if fragmented into so many directions, accomplish its goals? The question is in error. We need to ask, what do women need immediately to move toward full equality in partnership with men? This question suggests priorities. Priorities that affect the largest numbers of women. Special interest groups should not be able to take the movement eye off this goal.

For instance, the dual employment standard affects all women including our lesbian sisters. It seems basic then that our concern should be action to alleviate employment discrimination.

As history reflects on our six and one-half years of growth, certain priorities continue to burn for attention: one, discriminatory employment practices; two, equal motivation for young girls, heightened motivation for adult women; and three, women's positive image of themselves.

Employment is basic to women's economic life and encompasses many other areas. How would a married woman's life change if we had a six-hour working day? How would the six-hour day change a father's life and his relationship to children? How would a single woman be viewed if our changed society valued economic independence for both women and men?

Motivation is an important lever for more female choices. Few women now apply for job areas newly opened to them. Women's initiative and judgment have been depressed for longer than any woman can sustain courage in her own judgment. To change that we must push for total revision of our educational programs. And we must continue to motivate each other into trying new endeavors that utilize all our abilities.

The final product of any effort in the movement should be a positive self-image for every woman. Without a clear view of what each of us really is, women can not move forward into new areas individually or forge new equalities collectively. In this area the images projected by our media play an important role. These limited and stifling images in programming and advertising must be questioned until they change to show the varieties and complexities of women.

It is our challenge to direct our attention to these priorities and our challenge to commit time and action to fulfilling them. It is the result of how well we face these challenges that will determine the future direction of the feminist movement.

Mary-Ann Lupa is president of the Chicago Chapter of the National Organization for Women. Chicago NOW, one of the oldest chapters in the nation, and the largest civil rights organization for women's equality in the midwest, was founded in 1967. Ms. Lupa's civil rights experience includes the early black rights movement as well as participation in the National Welfare Rights Organization.

NOW – A Midwest View

KATHY RAND

The National Organization for Women is the oldest and largest women's rights organization in the midwest, indeed, in the world. As a regional director for NOW, I have the responsibility for organizing chapters in the 13-state area NOW calls its "midwest region." This week, NOW has 97 chapters in the midwest; and it grows at a rate of about one new chapter per week.

Having spent the last year traveling around the midwest organizing for NOW, I would like to share some of my observations, tell about what NOW is presently doing in this region, and give some of my thoughts for the future.

Although the movement is alive and well in this part of the country, I think we run into more resistance here than in other parts of the country, particularly on either coast. It seems to take more courage for midwestern women to say publicly, "I am a feminist, a member of NOW. I fully support the women's liberation movement."

Women in the midwest are less likely to join NOW for philosophical reasons than for personal reasons. Few midwestern women join NOW "just to be radical" or "because it's the thing to do." By and large, midwestern women join NOW because they have personally felt very real discrimination and they want to do something about it. The most common discrimination which brings women into NOW is economic, mostly in the area of employment.

First Priority: ERA

Right now, NOW's number one priority in the midwest, as well as in the rest of the country, is ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Most of our time, energy, and money are being put into the ERA. Ratification of the ERA will mean that the government sees women as people who are equal to men. Although it does not seem like much to ask, we have been fighting for this simple statement of equality for 50 years.

The fight for ratification of the ERA has been interesting because of the opposition it has brought out. Our efforts have given a whole group of people a cause fighting against ratification of the ERA. This opposition seems to be a symbol of the power of the women's movement. For years we have been laughed at and treated like a joke. Now the opposition is taking us seriously, and that's a good sign. If we're important enough for so many people – many of high stature – to put so much of their energy (and money) into fighting against us, we must finally have power. They're not laughing any more.

The ERA fight has also benefited NOW internally. Because it is such a burning issue, and because of all the opposition, it has helped NOW to organize statewide; it has helped us join in coalition with many other groups; and it has helped us strengthen our organization and increase our membership. And when the ERA is finally ratified by the 38th state, we will have won the right of equality for all women.

Much of NOW's energy – what's left after the ERA – is put into the area of employment. In the midwest, we are busy educating women about their rights in employment; boycotting companies which discriminate against women and minorities; helping women find jobs; filing class action suits against companies which discriminate; encouraging women to look for better jobs and to file charges against companies which have discriminated against them; and holding conferences to acquaint women with NOW's role in employment.

The two other major areas in which NOW is working in

the midwest are education and image. Our efforts in education range from filing sex discrimination charges against universities to trying to eliminate sexism in textbooks and children's books; from writing women's studies courses to teaching motivational, job-related courses for women.

Because we feel the image of women in the media is directly related to the status of women, NOW is working in this area. At present, we are trying to pressure advertisers to portray women in a less degrading way in ads; working through the FCC to assure that the broadcast media show different images of women and hire more women in professional and technical jobs; and working with newspapers to present better, more objective coverage of the women's movement.

All four of these issues — ERA, employment, education, and image — are carefully chosen, because they are issues which affect large numbers of women. And all four are issues which we must continue to work on as priorities until we have accomplished our goals.

While there are many important things that NOW must do, the major direction in which NOW must go in the midwest, I believe, is to organize for power. We must become a majority movement, and we must do it *now*.

Step one in organizing for power is membership recruitment. In the first six and one-half years of its history, NOW never had a membership drive. Most of our members have had to go to great trouble to even find us. We can no longer operate that way. In February, 1973, NOW did its first direct mail campaign, seeking both funds for the ERA and memberships. The response has been overwhelming, and we intend to do more of this. We are gaining, and must continue to gain, both the members and the funds we desperately need to accomplish our goals and effect changes in our society.

Step two requires that we reach out to men. NOW is an organization of both women and men fighting for the rights of women; our name (National Organization for Women) reflects this. NOW has never held the philosophy that men oppress women. Many institutions within our society oppress both men and women. We now must make a conscious effort to reach out to our brothers and work hand in hand with them to change these institutions. Women operating in a vacuum, ignoring men, cannot effect the needed changes in society. By working together with men we can become a majority movement.

One easy way in which we can reach out to men is by working toward changes in employment for all workers. Jobs which require people of any sex to work 10 or 12 hours a day do not permit the worker to participate in family life and personal relationships. I would like to see NOW in the midwest work toward changing the work ethic by pushing for such reforms as the six-hour day and voluntary overtime for all workers, paternity leave as well as maternity leave, and job-sharing. These kinds of changes can provide the balance which can make true equality possible. Women and men would be able to view both job and family as essential parts of their lives.

Women and Economics

DORIS QUINN

A persistent thread of economic considerations is woven into the fabric of the women's movement.

It is most visible at the beginning point for many women — the realization of the need for equal pay for equal work. This is one point on which almost all women can agree — even the ones who do not work and never intend to work outside the home. Often it is the economic necessities of life which force women to view their situations and decide that they have to help fight for women's rights if they expect anything to be changed.

The economic thread is not quite so obvious, but definitely there, when you try to organize a woman's group for some purpose. Many women simply have not reached the point where they feel free to spend their money to support organizations and ideas in which they are interested. A great deal of education needs to be done in this area, if the women's movement is to fulfill its promise.

Money to finance a feminine organization is hard to obtain, because men who have money to invest in worthy causes often are not in sympathy with feminist goals. Women who are possible contributors can be roughly divided into three categories:

- Idealistic, energetic, young women who make great workers, but who are relatively low on the economic scale, unless they inherited money.
- Middle-aged, married women who have become so accustomed to putting homes and families first when money is being allocated, that they think they can't contribute. These women could provide substantial amounts of money, if they could be persuaded to adjust their fiscal priorities.
- Older women who have the money to contribute to causes they deem worthy, but who are not in tune with the women's movement.

I've over-simplified the problem to make my point, because there are many other categories of women within the movement. But I do think it is a real problem.

In seeking solutions, I've found that some of these have worked:

- Raise the consciousness of a rich women who can afford to give a substantial contribution to your feminist organization. This is a great thing to do, because she usually is in a position to influence other women who need to be better informed in this area.
- Get women on the spot and ask them to put their money where their mouth is. I've done this by saying in a committee meeting, "There isn't any money in the treasury for this project, but we could finance it if we'd each chip in \$10." This doesn't always work, but it does nudge them toward thinking in the right direction. A group of men probably wouldn't hesitate to contribute on that basis, for a project that really interests them.
- Encourage monthly pledges. Women who handle family finances are used to doling out small amounts to various places each month. Somehow \$1 per month does not seem as much to them as \$12 a year.

My feeling is that women can weave a beautiful feminist tapestry, with our energy and our enthusiasm and our money — if we can just get the economic aspects under control.

Doris Quinn is a founder of the Missouri and Kansas City Women's Political Caucus.

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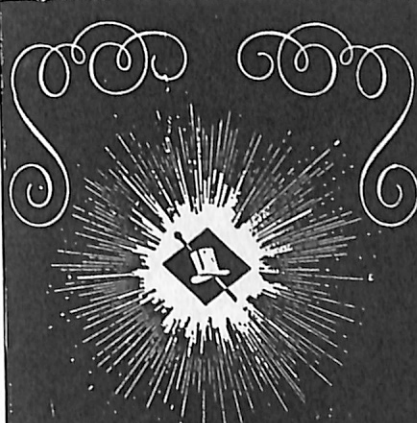
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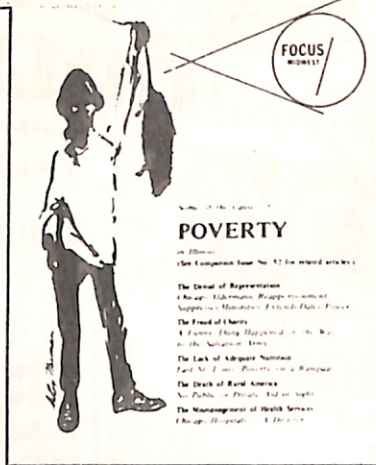
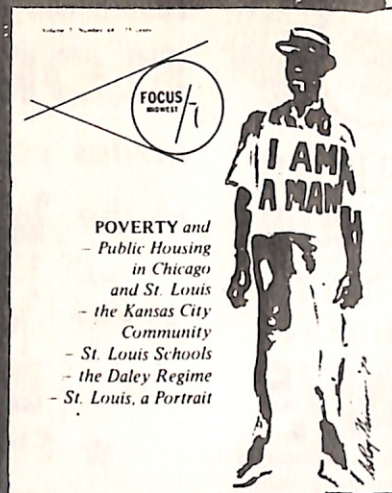
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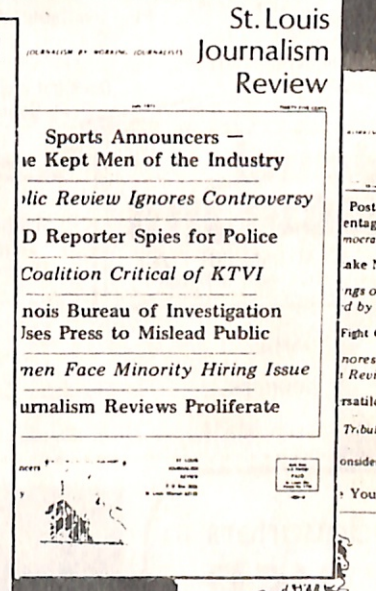
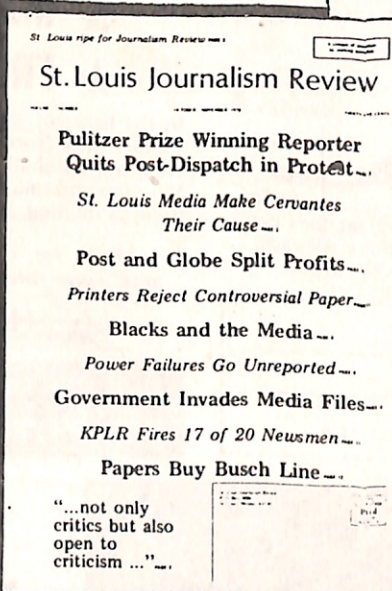
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